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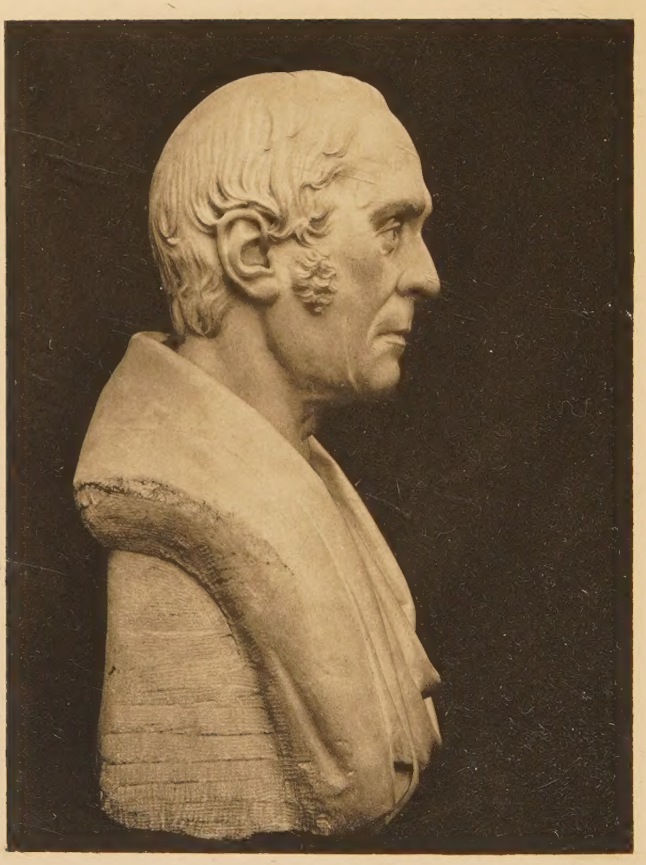

Henry Francis Cary

From the bust by an unknown artist in the British Museum

"Parson Primrose"

The Life, Work and Friendships of Henry Francis Cary (1772–1844)
Translator of Dante

by

R. W. King

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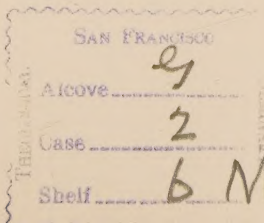

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MADE IN GREAT BRITAIN

TO

MY FATHER

AND

MY MOTHER

PREFACE

This book is the first serious attempt at a biography of Cary since 1847, when his son Henry issued in two good-sized volumes the *Memoir of the Rev. Henry Francis Cary, M.A., Translator of Dante, with his Literary Journal and Letters.* Without the information preserved in this family biography the present study could not have been written. It is, however, generally agreed that the *Memoir*, like many or most books of its type, does not do justice to its theme. A complete rehandling of the material available, both in the *Memoir* itself and elsewhere, is a tribute due to the memory of one who was the intimate friend of Lamb and Coleridge and the greatest Italian scholar of his age.

The *Memoir* is peculiar in providing a superabundance of information on the first half of Cary's life, while the later and more eventful years are somewhat meagrely chronicled. Of the numerous letters (about a hundred and fifty) printed by Henry Cary, all but a very few are addressed to relatives and family friends, and only a small proportion is of much interest. Of these, and of Henry Cary's own contribution (which is slight), I have aimed at retaining only so much as will, I hope, give an adequate impression of Cary's domestic life ; and in this way space has been gained for treating in some detail his literary friendships and his work as scholar, journalist, and translator.

On the literary side the *Memoir* is a disappointing production. It contains three letters from Lamb and four from

Coleridge, and gives a fair amount of information on the translation of Dante and on Cary's other writings. Beyond this, however, almost all the literary part of this biography has had to be sought elsewhere, in the letters and reminiscences of Anna Seward, Landor, Lamb, Coleridge, Darley, Clare, Thomas Hood and many other friends and acquaintances. Cary's letters to Lamb, Coleridge, and Darley have, it is to be feared, vanished beyond recall ; his grandson, the Rev. Offley H. Cary, told W. C. Hazlitt in 1886 that a box of papers, presumably including these letters, or some of them, had been stolen from the family about thirty years before and never recovered. Fortunately I have been able in some measure to fill the gap from the letters to Cary by these friends. To Miss K. A. Cary, the descendant of Cary's eldest son, I am indebted for permission to make use of letters from Lamb, Darley, Clare and others which have not previously appeared in book form. Some of them were printed in two articles by the present writer, "Charles Lamb, Cary, and the *London Magazine*," in the *Nineteenth Century* for September and October, 1923. Cary's letters to Clare are in the British Museum, among the Clare manuscripts, which include also letters from Taylor and Hessey and others, of which use has been made ; some of this material has been printed by Mr. Edmund Blunden in the *London Mercury*, June, 1921. From the unpublished Panizzi Correspondence, also in the British Museum, some new facts have been gleaned concerning Cary's career as an assistant in the national library.

It is a pleasure to record here my gratitude for assistance given by numerous friends and correspondents. To Sir Sidney Lee, my former teacher, I owe thanks for guidance and encouragement in preparing the thesis (presented for the M.A. degree at London University in 1919) which

formed the first sketch of this study. To Miss Cary, in addition to her generosity in the matter of manuscript material, I am indebted for the use of several portraits; and many other members of the Cary family have shown a kindly interest and willingness to answer inquiries. My thanks for help of various kinds are also due to Professor C. Foligno, Major A. S. Butterworth, Sig. A. Valgimigli, Messrs. Huxley St. John Brooks, H. M. Beatty, F. A. Downing, Edmund Blunden, and my friends Messrs. J. Isaacs and A. H. Dodd. To the late Mrs. G. A. Anderson, whose learning and enthusiasm in all matters connected with Charles Lamb were an inspiration to her friends, my obligations are particularly heavy.

I am indebted to Mr. E. V. Lucas for permission to quote from his edition of Lamb's letters; and with the sanction of the Trustees of Dr. Williams' Library, I have made use of the manuscript of Crabb Robinson's diary, from the unpublished parts of which some interesting information has been obtained.

Some passages in the last chapter have been adapted from an article by the present writer, "On Cary's Dante and Some Others," which appeared in *Blackfriars*, November, 1921.

Finally, I cannot omit to mention Dr. Paget Toynbee's invaluable works on the study of Dante in England; in particular, I have found his exhaustive compilation *Dante in English Literature* an indispensable companion at almost every stage of this work.

R. W. K.

University College of North Wales,
Bangor.

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CHAPTER I. BEGINNINGS (1772—1790)

In the year 1772 the First Regiment of Foot had for some time been on service at Gibraltar. Though there was still trouble in the Dardanelles, all was quiet at the other end of the Mediterranean ; even at this distance from Whitehall there were few who foresaw the coming struggle with the North American Colonies and the effect it was to have upon England's foreign relations. Towards the end of the year the First Regiment received the welcome news of its relief. Not less gratified at the prospect of a speedy return to England than his brother officers was a certain Captain William Cary, whose wife, Henrietta, had just born him a son—their first child. This was the future Translator of Dante, Henry Francis Cary, born at Gibraltar on December 6, 1772.

After no more than the usual delays Captain Cary found himself, with his wife and infant son, once more in England. He had seen no fighting ; but, though of a somewhat choleric humour, he seems to have had little inclination for a military career. Perhaps he had already, at twenty-six, seen enough to dispel romantic illusions ; at any rate, within a year or two he sold his commission and settled down in Staffordshire to the peaceful pursuits of a well-to-do country gentleman, satisfying such desire for authority as he possessed by twice serving as High Sheriff of his county. He lived thus for over half-a-century more ; married in all three times ; and cultivated his garden in philosophic calm while

wars and revolutions arose, raged, and subsided over half the globe. The "glorious First of June" found him still a country gentleman; his tastes and ambitions had not changed when Trafalgar and Waterloo were fought; and France had seen the last of the restored Bourbons before the hale old man drank his last glass of port and slipped gently into his grave at the ripe age of eighty-eight.

The accident of Cary's birth at Gibraltar (which he never revisited) had little effect on his later career. The family connections were with the Midland counties and with Ireland; and the future vicar of Abbots Bromley was, in the main, descended from Anglo-Irish, but orthodox Anglican stock. His great-grandfather, Mordecai Cary (1687-1751), may have been connected with the famous Devon Carys of whom Lucius Cary, Viscount Falkland, who met his death at the Battle of Newbury in 1643, is the best-remembered representative. Mordecai's parents, however, seem to have been poor, and he got his schooling at Christ's Hospital, a century before Lamb and Coleridge. The Hospital authorities sent him to Trinity College, Cambridge, where he gained a fellowship. In 1731 he went to Ireland as chaplain to the Duke of Dorset, the Lord Lieutenant. Dorset's regular custom was to fill the Irish sees with English bishops of pronounced Whig opinions, and accordingly he very soon obtained for Mordecai the see of Clonfert. His friend Dean Swift disapproved of the Lord Lieutenant's policy on both political and social grounds, and cannot have been very polite to Mordecai when, as is probable, they met in Dublin. Nothing, however, or nothing further, is recorded to the discredit of Mordecai Cary; he was translated to the see of Killala in 1735, printed two or three sermons, and died without further preferment. Of his eldest son, Henry, nothing is known

save that he was archdeacon of his father's see, Killala. A younger son of the archdeacon was William, the father of the Translator of Dante.

On the maternal side Cary's ancestors were also, in the first instance, Anglo-Irish, but ultimately French. Theophilus Brocas, father of Cary's mother, belonged to an Irish branch of the French family of de Brocas.[1] His father, Gabriel La Motte de Brocas, had an adventurous life, being disinherited by his mother and afterwards severely disabled when fighting as a ranker under William III in Ireland. Theophilus, a sedater person, was a much-respected citizen of Dublin, who had been Dean of Killala : there, about 1770, his daughter Henrietta was courted by Captain William Cary, the son, as we have seen, of the archdeacon of the same diocese.

Between the return from Gibraltar and her early death, about 1780, Henrietta Cary bore her husband two more children, William Robert, who became a colonel in the Royal Artillery and died in 1834 a few weeks after his father, and Georgina, who married her brother Henry's lifelong friend, Thomas Price.

Of the earliest years of Henry Francis Cary few details have been preserved, but it is clear that the almost extreme modesty and sensibility which Charles Lamb, among others, noticed long after, became perceptible at a very early age. These qualities he seems to have inherited from his mother, whose devoted attention to him during a serious illness under which he suffered in his fifth year called forth all his affection. At her death shortly after, he was offered a gold watch as a consolation ; in a paroxysm of grief and indignation he threw it on the ground and dashed it to pieces.

[1] Montague Burrows, *The Family of Brocas of Beaurepaire and Roche Court*, 1886, pp. 272-5. Through the French line Cary's mother was distantly connected with the eminent English family.

Cary's allusions to his mother in later years are not very numerous, the very keenness of his sensibilities making him slow to give them expression in words; but there is one passage, in a letter to his friend Walter Birch in 1807, which tells us enough. Birch's mother had died at an advanced age, and in his letter of condolence Cary contrasts "the difference of our lots" in this respect:

> You reach almost to the middle of your natural term before you are deprived of the advantage and comfort of having such a parent. Mine was taken away from me in early childhood, so that not even the slightest impression of her form remains on my memory, though I can recollect something of a sweetness, which is known to me chiefly from the extreme bitterness with which I felt its loss.

Cary attended his first school, at Uxbridge in Middlesex, from about 1780 to 1783, by which time he had attained to some proficiency in Latin and Greek. In his eleventh year he was sent up to Rugby School, one reason for the choice, no doubt, being its comparative nearness to Sutton Coldfield, where his father was then living. He stayed at Rugby, however, only a little over two years. His son gives as the reason for his early removal that his delicate health "unfitted him for the turmoil of a public school"; but there is no reason to suppose that Cary was uncomfortable there, and since his next school was in Sutton itself, it is probable that the change may have been due to considerations of expense. At all events, brief though his time was at Rugby, it proved a period of some importance. Several lifelong friendships began there, and in the robust atmosphere of the public school Cary developed that sound commonsense which later saved him from the worst extremes of "sentiment."

With Cary, in January 1783, there entered at Rugby Walter Savage Landor, then a clever, unruly little urchin of

eight, and William Digby, son of the Dean of Durham and afterwards a prebendary of Worcester Cathedral. Later came two other future parsons, Edward Bullock and Walter Birch, who like Digby were to be lifelong intimates of Cary. With the fiery and wilful Landor Cary, who was of a peaceable disposition, seems from the first to have maintained a friendly acquaintance rather than a close friendship ; but at Rugby and Oxford, and later on as well, Birch was a link between the two. "Poor Cary!" wrote Landor many years after, "I remember him at Rugby and Oxford. He was the friend of my friend Walter Birch, whom I fought at Rugby, and who thrashed me well."

Rugby was a much smaller and also a less disciplined school in these days before the great Dr. Arnold made good behaviour a pleasure and prefectship a coveted distinction ; during the dull mastership before that of Cary's day its numbers had sunk to 50, and even under Dr. James, Cary and Landor's Head, about 170 was the average, a striking contrast to the 500 of half a century later. Yet there was a surprising number of interesting boys at the school in the 1780's, including a future Bishop of Oxford, the Hon. E. Legge ; a Waterloo veteran, General Clifton ; Bishop Butler, the Headmaster of Shrewsbury School and grandfather of "Erewhon" Butler ; and a whole host of Thackerays, among them the novelist's grandfather. But it is clear that among these promising youngsters Landor, the rebellious genius, very soon took the lead. Cary and Birch looked on with quiet amusement while Landor maliciously entangled the worthy Head in abstruse problems of longs and shorts, or dumbfounded him with the excellence of his Latin verses, which remained a tradition in the school for half a century. One of the best of many stories told of Landor concerns his being caught eating an apple in class.

Challenged by Dr. James to compose a Latin verse as a ransom for his apple, Landor readily obliged with :

Esuriens doctor dulcia poma rapit.

Cary did not see the end of Landor's stormy career at Rugby ; for it was several years after the former's departure that Landor, having been rude to Dr. James in the course of a disagreement over a Latin quantity, was removed from the school " by arrangement."

Rugby friendships were renewed four or five years later, at Oxford ; but for the present Cary passed into another circle. At Sutton Coldfield Grammar School, where the author of the *Anatomy of Melancholy* had " endured a martyrdom " nearly two hundred years before, Cary was quite happy. Though he spent little over a year there (1786-7), he had time to form " undying " friendships with two schoolfellows, Thomas Lister and John Humberston. Cary had a strong talent for friendship ; but in these impressionable years his natural bent received a powerful and not very beneficial stimulus from the romantic sentiment which had been begun, in England, by Richardson's novels, had been cultivated by Sterne, and ended in the imbecilities of the Della Cruscans. For six or seven years Cary expressed himself, particularly in his verses, in the only too elegant idiom of the world of polite sensibility which preferred *The Man of Feeling* to *The Vicar of Wakefield* and Prior's *Henry and Emma* to *The Nut-Brown Maid.* Miss Seward had been christened Ann and called Nancy as a girl ; but when she grew up and became a poetess she made everyone (except her father) call her " Anna " : to this day no one has been rude enough to refer to her by any other name. On the same principle Cary and his friends invented " poetic " names for themselves. Lister, by an easy verbal transition,

became "Lycid"; Cary, for reasons not so readily discovered, was "Marcellus"; and Humberston, it is probable, was called "Tityrus."

The youthful trio were all keen on their studies—for the examination system was not yet—and of a decidedly poetical turn of mind. At fourteen they were already beginning to meditate the Muse who, they firmly believed, could never prove thankless. But first—and in this, there is little doubt, Cary the born translator was the leader—the world must be made to see, what surely *they* were the first to see truly, the greatness of the Greek poets. They planned a joint metrical translation of the whole Corpus Poetarum Graecorum. For a start, Tityrus took charge of Homer, Lycid of Hesiod, and Marcellus of Anacreon and Moschus. Pindar was held over for the present; but he was only biding his time, for nearly fifty years later Cary published his translation of the *Odes*—the only part of this grand project ever carried out.

For alas! stern parents did not see eye to eye with the "young enthusiasts": the triumvirate was dispersed. Cary was transferred, in 1787, to his fourth school, the King Edward VI Grammar School at Birmingham: Tityrus declined into a medical student at Edinburgh, to reappear about 1800 as plain Dr. Humberston, physician to Cary and his rapidly-increasing family: and Lycid fell even lower. He suffered from a slight stutter, or as Miss Seward puts it, from "an unfortunate hesitation in his speech, which forbids the pursuit of an oratoric profession"; and so, sorely against his will, he was placed with Mr. Cobb, the "eminent banker" of Lichfield, his native town and the residence also of the celebrated Miss Seward herself.

From Birmingham, or from his home at Sutton Coldfield, Cary maintained a copious correspondence with his

friend at Lichfield. By 1787, their fifteenth year (their ages were almost exactly equal) both had begun to write original verses, which were sent to and fro for mutual admiration and criticism. Cary's earliest traceable composition, dating from the summer of this year, actually attained the dignity of separate publication, in the Spring of 1788. This was the *Irregular Ode to General Eliott*,[1] which connects itself both with Cary's birthplace and with his discipleship to Miss Seward, already unmistakable, though at this time he had not yet met the lady.

From 1780 to 1783 all Europe had looked on with eager interest and admiration at the determined defence of Gibraltar against the French and Spanish by an English garrison, outnumbered by nearly five to one, but commanded by a man who was a host in himself, General Eliott, created Lord Heathfield as the reward for his success. Heathfield, whose bull-dog features are familiar in the fine flamboyant portrait by Sir Joshua Reynolds, gave a final proof of his virtues as a commander by refusing to leave Gibraltar when the siege was raised, in 1783, until he had seen the fortifications repaired. His return to England four years later was like the triumph of a Roman general. Public-house keepers hastened to rechristen their premises "The General Eliott," or "The Eliott Arms"; and Miss Seward and Cary wrote verses. Miss Seward, naturally more expert, timed her effusion[2] almost to the exact day of Heathfield's arrival in London. The gallant soldier was so flattered that he included a special visit to the fair and famous "Muse"

[1] Birmingham, qto., 1788: "by Henry Francis Cary." I have not seen this production, which is now scarce; neither the British Museum nor the Bodleian Library has a copy. The review in the *Gentleman's Magazine* (July, 1788, p. 633), however, gives as usual very full extracts.

[2] *Ode on General Eliott's Return from Gibraltar*, qto., 1787: published early in June. Cf. *Seward Letters*, i. pp. 297, 306–7.

in the programme of his triumphal progress through the chief towns of England, though he would not stop at Oxford to receive an honorary degree :

> From crowds, from courts he hastes,—his speed in vain
> Fam'd Isis' sons with honours would detain—
> Hastes, in her bright-ey'd form the Muse to greet,
> And grateful takes his laurels at her feet,

as another songster informs us.[1]

Cary, no doubt, might have been inspired to write solely by the sentimental association of the subject with his birth-place ; but there is also little doubt that his admiration for Miss Seward's earlier works,—her elegies on Captain Cook and the unfortunate Major André, her sonnets, and the rest, disposed him, not to emulate (that would have been far too presumptuous) but to imitate her ode to Eliott in his own first attempt. We need not spend many words over Cary's infantile effusion. It is really no worse than Miss Seward's ode, which is equally worthless as poetry if a little less feeble as verses. Cary follows the usual line of the sham-Pindaric of the day, the debased progeny of Gray. Perhaps this tribute to Miss Seward, with its palpable crib from Gray's " Progress of Poesy " may be endurable as a specimen : [2]

> But ah ! what Nymph of heavenly mien
> Bears the living lyre in hand ?
> Is she of the lovely maids
> Who in Pindus' festal shades . . .
> To rapture give each trembling string ?

[1] *Gent. Mag.*, Nov., 1787, p. 1002. A diverting account of the visit is given in E. V. Lucas, *A Swan and Her Friends* (1907), pp. 81-3.

[2] *Note by Cary* : Miss Seward. The writings of this lady are so universally known and admired, that to make particular mention of them here, would be impertinent.

Meanwhile their rosy-braided hair,
Waving to the wanton air,
That wafts the vernal spoil along,
And softly swells the harmonious song !
'Tis Clio's self—her sweet majestic mien
Bespeaks the graceful Queen ;
E'en she has deigned, in her immortal lays,
To celebrate the hero's praise,
Amid the stars his name to enroll,
And spread his glorious fame from pole to pole.

No wonder Miss Seward smiled on the "youthful bard"!

She very soon had an opportunity of doing so. Lister had probably paid his respects as soon as he left Sutton Coldfield for the bank at Lichfield ; and he lost no time in presenting his friend's ode for her approval. Miss Seward was well over forty ; but she was a woman, and a poetess as well : her heart was won. Lister persuaded his parents to invite Cary to stay at Armitage Park, their house near Lichfield, for an occasional holiday ; and during the first of these visits, in the Spring of 1788, Cary knelt at the feet of the "Swan of Lichfield," as she was generally called, and was enrolled among her disciples and adorers.

Little as the average reader knows of her nowadays, Miss Seward will always be remembered by a select few : not quite, however, as she intended and expected. She was the first really famous bluestocking—not merely the centre of an adoring circle of friends, but famous all over England. Absurd as she was, she extorts a certain respect for her force of character, her kindness of heart, and the indomitable self-confidence which was the better part of her enormous vanity. Her three bulky volumes of verses are now unbearable excep perhaps in very small doses, but some amusement and much interesting information may still be got by dipping

into her correspondence, a small proportion of which (about five hundred letters) was printed by Constable in 1811.

It is hard to resist the temptation to enlarge upon her career. The daughter of a canon-residentiary of Lichfield, the Rev. Thomas Seward, she spent most of her long life in the Bishop's Palace on the Dean's Walk at Lichfield, tending her father, cultivating the Muses, and writing letters, at which she must have spent nearly as much time in fact as Clarissa or Miss Howe did in fiction. She had two or three love affairs, but never married. Her minor amusements included writing sermons for friends among the clergy, and unearthing poetic talent in unlikely spots—among carpenters, milk-women, village organists ; or alternatively, as with Cary and Lister, among the very youthful members of her admiring circle. Like Lamb's friend, George Dyer, she thought verse and poetry were interchangeable terms, and admired almost anything in metre —provided it was written by a friend, or a friend's friend, or an anonymous admirer of her own talents. She adored Shakespeare and Milton, Pope and Gray, too ; but somehow she got it all wrong, and even these great names seem veiled in a sort of tawdry "elegance" when she speaks of them. Cary's first poetic preceptor was certainly not a very lucky choice.

Among her friends, admirers, and correspondents were Dr. Parr, "Sandford and Merton" Day, and those once famous poets, William Hayley and Erasmus Darwin, to whom she introduced Cary.[1] A greater than any of these, Dr. Johnson himself, her fellow-townsman, condescended to praise some of her verses ; but Miss Seward did not like the Doctor. She had many reasons, and good ones too, for this.

[1] Hayley we shall meet later. With Darwin Cary's acquaintance seems to have been very slight. He gives a few reminiscences, of no particular interest, in his life of the poet (*London Magazine*, Dec., 1822 ; *Lives of English Poets*, 1846, p. 246 *sq.*).

A bear is not good company for a swan, and Johnson, despite his complacent belief to the contrary, was not really a lady's man. Moreover, he was unfair to Gray and Milton, and did not like sonnets—even hers. But his grand crime was having been born at Lichfield. True, the Bishop's Palace was a place of pilgrimage for all the sons of light, but so was Johnson's birthplace. When the new theatre was opened at Lichfield in 1793, the curtain rose and discovered a Drop Scene, which included among its attractions a painted medallion of Miss Seward, "THE GENIUS OF THE PLACE"; but there were other medallions too, "featuring" Dr. Johnson as "Wisdom" and his friend, Mr. Garrick, as "Grace." [1]

Still, upon the whole Miss Seward had not much to complain of. Her fame was greatest, perhaps, between 1780 and 1790; towards 1800 she began to be neglected or, worse, to be adversely criticised: yet at the very end of her life she managed to entangle that good-natured genius, Walter Scott, in a correspondence which wasted far too much of his time. "I have not yet read Miss Seward's letters," he wrote a year or two after her death: "God knows I had enough of them when she lived—for she did not imitate the Ancient Romans in brevity." He goes on, however, in a kindlier strain remarkable enough, considering she had made him her literary executor without asking his consent:

> Yet she was an uncommon woman, and bating her conceit and pedantry, had some excellent points about her. Had she mingled more in general society, and been less the directress of a little circle, we should have had less *tracasserie* and more good sense in her letters.[2]

On the whole this is just.

[1] Cf. *Gent. Mag.*, Oct., 1793, p. 941.

[2] *Letters from and to C. K. Sharpe, Esq.*, 1798-1850, ed. Allardyce and Bedford, 2 vol. 1888, i. 476.

Such then was the luminary in whose warm rays Cary and Lister sunned themselves for a time. Their devotion to her, like their friendship for each other, knew no bounds. Miss Seward, for her part, was not less obliging, and her friends soon began to hear about "our young bards." "Cary, literally but just fifteen, is a miracle," she wrote, in June 1788, to a Mr. Swift (a poet, of course):

I never saw him, nor heard of him till after his Ode to General Elliot came out. My acquaintance with him is not of four months' date. His schoolfellow and friend, Lister . . . has poetic talents of nearly twin-excellence. . . . You suspect my having assisted Cary. Upon my honour, I never saw anything of his that has been published before it was sent away to be printed. The strength and solidity of that boy's mind, his taste, his judgment, astonish me, if possible, even more than the vigour and grace of his fancy.

To Hayley she gave a long account of their poetical efforts: "They write original odes, and also sonnets, upon the Miltonic model; and with success that is quite miraculous in years so blossoming. . . . Lister writes very sweetly for such a youth, but I think Cary's vein the richer."

This is absurd enough, but here and there, if only by accident, she does give us a glimpse or two of what the boys were like. One such glimpse, in spite of the Swan's tendency to see real life in terms of very highly-coloured romance, I think we may accept as genuine evidence of Cary's modesty; she is telling Hayley of the young author's eager desire that the great man should glance at his new volume of poems (this was Cary's *Sonnets and Odes* of 1788):

When he brought them [the poems] to me last week, he said, with a deep sigh, "I wish Mr. Hayley may look at a few of them." Send him a copy, said I: "Ah no! I cannot be so obtrusive. If he should take no notice of even a tribute so worthless I should be wounded, nor can I wish he should have the trouble of writing one line of acknowledgment for what perhaps he might not endure to read."

The volume was sent, however; and Hayley, it is pleasant to know, returned the proper message of encouragement, tempered with a caution to the young poet not to look for any pecuniary advantage from the Muse. Cary was "beyond measure gratified" by the notice taken of him, though he protested that he needed no warning against "bright illusions." We need not be surprised at his veneration for the "Bard of Sussex," for Hayley's reputation, since the huge success of *The Triumphs of Temper* (1791) was, if possible, greater than Miss Seward's; and in 1790, on the death of Thomas Warton, he had the refusal of the Laureateship. "Où sont les neiges d'antan?"—Hayley is remembered now only as the good-hearted friend of Cowper and of Blake. Long before his death in 1820, not only had Cary's opinion of his work been drastically revised, but Byron had jeered at his masterpiece as "for ever feeble and for ever tame," and Southey had paid him a double-edged compliment by writing, "Everything about that man is good except his poetry." But in 1789 Cary could imagine nothing finer than the poetry and nobody more amiable than the man, and he was eager for the honour of a meeting. This last felicity, however, seems to have been denied him for the present.

For a time at least Hayley's friendship with the Swan was very close, and in 1788 he made her a truly munificent

MISS SEWARD, THE "SWAN OF LICHFIELD"

From the painting by George Romney.

gift—her own portrait, painted by his friend, the famous George Romney. In Miss Seward's *Epistle to Romney*, describing its arrival at Lichfield, we find, beneath some very odd poetical diction, a pleasant and in its way vivid impression of Cary and Lister agog with excitement as they watched the unpacking of the picture :

The Shades of yesternight were softly drawn
Wide o'er these blooming fields, and circling lawn,
And the dear Full of Days [her father] his pillow prest
In the soft slumber of an infant's rest ;
Two wond'rous Youths, who strike the Muses' lyre,
Ere manhood's dawn, with all a poet's fire,
Sat by thy friend, to speed the evening hours
By culling florets from Aonian bowers ;
When gladly, through the swift-unfolding door,
The promis'd gift a smiling servant bore.
With curious eyes the youthful Lyrists hail
The heav'd dismission of each tardy nail,
Till to their sight the speaking canvass shone,
And made the magic of thy pencil known.

Elsewhere we learn a little more about their looks and behaviour. Lister, "dear lovely little Lister," as another friend describes him, had clear blue eyes, and was decidedly a handsome boy ("beautiful as a vernal morning," is the Swan's phrase), lively and sweet-tempered. Cary's disposition was "more saturnine," and in appearance he was more obviously the student. Writing to Mr. Newton the "poetical carpenter," Miss Seward transcribes approvingly the sentiments of the Rev. T. S. Whalley :

Have you seen the reserved and pensive Cary, since I left you ? He is a very extraordinary lad, strongly marked in manners, as well as mind, by the hand of genius. His total freedom from ostentation, and severe kind of simplicity,

are uncommon features at any, and much more at his age, in a nation so immersed in luxury, vanity, vice, and varnished manners, as is England now.

Our authorities, it must be confessed, are not unimpeachable, but after making all necessary deductions, I think we may say that Cary was a remarkable lad. Perhaps Mr. Whalley really meant no more.

The verses by Cary and Lister so often mentioned by Miss Seward with "partial praise" had begun to appear in the pages of the *Gentleman's Magazine* devoted to "Select Poetry, Antient and Modern," as early as the summer of 1787. This quaint miscellany, with its bad paper, its evil type, and its smudgy woodcut of St. John's Gate, Clerkenwell, on the "Contents" page, was then an indispensable ornament of every gentleman's table. It contained a mixture of antiquarianism, popular science, and polite learning. Letters and articles on Sunday Schools, Electric Cats, and Classical Remarks on Trees are jumbled together in entertaining fashion. In one number three successive articles are entitled "Account of Human Body converted into Bone," "Proceedings in the last Session of Parliament," and "An Effectual Solvent for the Stone." None of the contributors seem to have been paid, and the quality of the writing, whether prose or verse, is in most cases what might be expected of amateurs whose chief ambition was to see themselves in print. Among the verse-writers Cowper occasionally did not disdain to appear, but Miss Seward was a far more copious contributor. Between 1787 and 1790 Cary and his friends are responsible for a considerable mass of verse, none of which rises much above the level of the *Irregular Ode to General Eliott.* Lister wrote a good many, including sonnets to Miss Seward and to Cary, and Humberston sent a few pieces from Edinburgh. Cary,

however, was by far the most prolific. As "M——s" (Marcellus), or under his real name, he figures in almost every number from June 1787 to the end of 1789.[1] His verses include original sonnets and odes, a few Latin verses, translations from a number of the odes of Horace, some scraps from Greek, and, in 1789, his first attempt at verse translation from Italian poetry. None of the original verses were worth printing, of course; and at this period his remarks on the art of translation are far more interesting than his actual attempts. After going up to Oxford he seems to have felt this, and his later contributions are less numerous and mostly in prose.

Some of the earlier *Gentleman's Magazine* verses were reprinted in Cary's second independent volume, the *Sonnets and Odes*[2] of 1788, which followed the *Irregular Ode* at an interval of less than six months. This whole body of verses is, perhaps, worth a glance to extend our ideas of Cary's talents before he discovered Italian poetry and Dante. The *Sonnets and Odes* contains three longer pieces, bristling with personifications and "tributes" to Miss Seward, Hayley and the "shade" of Gray. The sonnets number nearly thirty; there are two to Miss Seward, two to Hayley, three to Lister, and many more to various abstract nouns, Fancy, Pity (naturally "mild"), and the like. Cary's

[1] The *Memoir* account (i. pp. 6-7) is incomplete and misleading: Cary was contributing under his own name from March, 1788. It is certain that M—s was a pseudonym of Cary (an allusion in *Seward Letters*, iii. p. 349, puts it beyond doubt), and it is probable that he also used M.C.S. as another contraction of Marcellus, and that contributions to the *Gent. Mag.* in June and July, 1787 (pp. 529, 625) and later with this signature are his. I think we may also assume that verses signed T.L. or T.L——d (Lycid) are Lister's and that those signed T.T.R. or T.T.S. (Tityrus) are Humbertson's.

[2] *Sonnets and Odes: by Henry Francis Cary*, London, 1788, qto. Issued in October or November, with two introductory sonnets by Miss Seward.

themes have little to commend them now ; but the sonnets have some shadow of interest as early contributions, correct at least in form, to the revival of the sonnet before Wordsworth. It is perhaps worth noticing that William Lisle Bowles's sonnets, which had so much effect on Coleridge, did not appear till 1789.[1] All Cary's personal sonnets are intolerably "Sewardian" ; but here and there he has a touch of natural description not without merit :

How sweet to roam abroad, when twilight gray
O'er the dank fields her dusky mantle throws,
When close the woodbine and the briar rose,
At the departure of the sinking day !

This simpler and sincerer note may be observed also in a few of the *Gentleman's Magazine* verses, for example in a short "Ode" (November, 1788) beginning thus :

Mark where yon lucid stream,
Beneath the moon's pale beam,
In silence glides along the shadowy vale,
Upon whose rushy bank,
The waving willow dank
Mournfully whispers to the passing gale.

Even here the stamp of the Hayley-Mason-Seward set is only too obvious in the "poetic" diction. Still, perhaps it is not too rash to say we might guess from these passages

[1] It is curious, in view of Cary's later friendship with Coleridge, to find several small links connecting them quite early in life, though actually they did not meet till 1817. Coleridge read Cary's *Sonnets and Odes* in 1796 and, disagreeing with Miss Seward's argument, in her introductory "Sonnet on the Sonnet," for strictness of form, wrote some remarks which after all were not printed in his lifetime (Cf. his *Poetical Works*, ed. E. H. Coleridge, Oxford, 1912, pp. 1138-40). Similarly, Cary may have only just missed meeting Coleridge at Oxford in 1794.

that Cary had begun to appreciate something beyond the Swan's notions of poetry, even if we had not his admiring references elsewhere to Spenser, Milton, Cowper, Burns, and Chatterton to confirm us.

Indeed, at this period we get a juster notion of Cary from his prose than from the almost entirely imitative verses. From the latter it might seem that he was utterly under the sway of Miss Seward and her preposterous sentimentalism ; but his letters and his early prose contributions to the *Gentleman's Magazine* tell a different story. In fact it is pretty certain that his bad verse style was due to modesty rather than to affectation. Miss Seward and Hayley wrote in this way ; and surely they *must* be right, for all England was singing their praises. How could he, a mere boy, venture to write otherwise ? But in prose he could enjoy a little more freedom of opinion. In exchanging views on poets who were safely dead, and whose reputations were therefore not a matter of personal concern to the Swan, he could say what he thought without fear of offending her. In this way Cary's natural good sense and taste very soon began to show themselves, and Miss Seward and all she stood for did not do him nearly so much harm as might be supposed.

In his first surviving letter to Miss Seward (July 20, 1788) we learn of an interesting disagreement, on the question of " close " or " free " translation, which was to concern him so greatly later on. Miss Seward, though almost entirely innocent of Latin, had a habit of writing " poetical paraphrases " of Latin poems based on literal prose renderings supplied by her more learned friends. " If anything could made me a convert to diffuse translation," Cary says tactfully of one of these productions, " it would be your version of Horace." Next year he even ventures to contradict her openly :

On some poetic topics we are fated to disagree. Such is that with regard to the diffuseness or fidelity of a translator. The first object of translation is to give you the clearest and most intimate acquaintance with the original. For this reason the strictest version may justly be called the best. . . . There are not many expressions in the dead languages which may not in ours be rendered almost literally, and in an adequate manner. To effect this, indeed, demands the nicest skill and the happiest precision. My assertions will, I trust, soon be reduced to example by the immortal author of "The Task." If he answers my expectations, and you still continue to prefer Pope, you must be content to prefer him to Homer.—(March 5, 1789.)

Cary was a little over sixteen when he wrote this, but it might almost come from the preface to his translation of Dante. It sums up with perfect clearness the principles upon which he afterwards worked.

Equally positive and independent was Cary's expression of opinion in a great paper warfare over the poetic merits of Dryden and Pope. This filled columns of the *Gentleman's Magazine* between 1789 and 1791, and if the editor had not at length applied the closure there is no telling when it would have ended. Cary's two contributions,[1] his first prose to be printed, are remarkable for their good sense and sound taste, especially when we take into account his youth and the fatuous and dogmatic silliness of most of the other writers.

The dispute began with a reply by Miss Seward to an attack on Pope by a Mr. Weston, a gentleman whom we may be content to describe in his fair antagonist's friendly but ambiguous phrase as "a better poet than critic." She argues that the eighteenth century, from Pope down to her

[1] *Gent. Mag.*, Aug., 1789, pp. 682-3 (dated Aug. 5); and Feb., 1790, pp. 120-1 (dated Oct. 11, 1789). Both are signed M——s.

own times, can boast many more poets of genius than the ages of Shakespeare, Milton, or the overrated Dryden ; and she gives a catalogue of great poets, arranged in periods. Her earlier lists are woefully scanty, but in her own time she finds abundance ; and she ends a long list with "the Seven[1] celebrated Female Poets" (Mrs. Barbauld, Hannah More, and the like) and "the rising poetic lights, Cary and Lister." Unconvinced by this handsome testimonial, Cary intervened, in his first contribution, as a strong champion of Dryden and the poets preceding him :

I cannot help thinking that . . . in endeavouring to vindicate Pope and the moderns from some undeserved accusations, [Miss Seward] has been too hard upon Dryden, and totally unfair in her estimation of the poets of preceding times. . . . The list of poetic writers in Milton's age might be swelled to an equal amount, if all those who were admired during their lives were admitted. But it must be more than common excellence which can insure a reputation of an hundred years ; and probably in that space many of those luminaries, which contribute to the splendour of the present day, will be extinguished and forgotten.

In reply to this Miss Seward devoted a long article to proving, politely but firmly, that Cary was talking nonsense, and that Pope, in virtue of his "superior taste and judgment," was "much the finest poet." Cary thereupon proceeded to define his position a little more exactly. He professes "something like indignation" at her assumption that *all* the poets satirised in the *Dunciad* are equally contemptible ; nevertheless, he does not associate himself with Mr. Weston's furious attack on Pope's personal character. The conclusion

[1] Miss Seward having modestly omitted her own name, the editor of the *Gent. Mag.* supplies the indispensable footnote : "Fear of offending an amiable correspondent prevents our changing this to EIGHT."

of this article gives a comparison between the two poets which, for the particular purpose, is remarkably just and intelligent :

While Dryden, studying to render his poetic garden rather spacious than nicely beautiful, suffered the rankest weeds to spring up among the most luxuriant flowers, and entirely neglected the assistance of art ; Pope, with deliberate leisure, was employed in banishing every appearance of disorder, in adjusting his delicate plants in the most striking dispositions, and in checking, sometimes too severely, the sportive wantonness of Nature. There are some, who (to preserve the metaphor) are on the whole more delighted with the wilderness of the former, than with the regular, yet elegant parterres of the latter ; and I profess myself to be one of the number. I conclude with adding the testimonies of two deservedly celebrated modern poets in favour of Dryden. Gray, finishing one of his letters to Dr. Beattie, has these remarkable words, " Remember Dryden, and be blind to all his faults." And Mr. Warton calls Palamon and Arcite " the most animated and harmonious piece of versification in the English language."

Having thus sensibly summed the matter up Cary retired from the controversy. Mr. Weston, however, was not so moderate ; he continued his attacks on the personal character of Pope until, in that ferocious satire, *The Baviad* (1794), he was extinguished by the redoubtable Gifford, who certainly did not mince matters :

> Weston ! who slunk from truth's imperious light,
> Swells like a filthy toad, with secret spite,
> And, envying the fair fame he cannot hope,
> Spits his black venom at the dust of Pope.
> Reptile accurs'd !

Miss Seward, though she thought both Cary and Lister showed, as almost their sole fault, " an aptness to decide too

arrogantly against general opinion, to take whimsical aversions to beautiful writers," did not smile on Cary the less sweetly for his sturdy independence in this matter ; for he had not failed to mingle the proper proportion of compliment to her genius with his censure of her judgment. But in quite a different part of his studies Cary's reading was already drawing him in a direction in which he was soon to find himself compelled to choose absolutely between his taste and hers. It was Cary's study of Italian poetry which led, in a year or two, to the withdrawal not only of Miss Seward's critical assent, but of some measure of her favour as well.

What first inspired Cary's devotion to the Italian poets is not quite certain. The example of Milton and Gray, and the curiosity which would naturally be aroused by the numerous references to Italian writers in Warton's *History of English Poetry*, a new work in Cary's schooldays, no doubt all had their effect. It is, however, clear that his interest in the greatest of the Italians, Dante himself, did not begin until after he had acquired a fair knowledge of the language. There is no sign that he knew anything of Dante before he went up to Oxford, by which time he had been reading Italian for at least a year. Quite possibly it was at the suggestion of his father or of the Headmaster of the Birmingham School, Mr. Price, that Cary began, about the end of 1788, to add to his already exceptional knowledge of Greek, Latin, and French the study of Italian. Little as was then known in England of Dante and the earlier and greater Italian writers, a knowledge of Italian was a recognised part of " polite learning." Although, on account of its associations with music, girls were taught the language more regularly than boys, there was nothing unusual in its acquisition by a promising young classical scholar during the year preceding his matriculation at the University.

Cary's teacher at Birmingham was A. Vergani, an Italian who taught also French and Latin. Vergani was one of the numerous immigrants (frequently refugees from the oppressive governments in the Italian states) who earned their living in this way, and incidentally did something to foster the closer study of Italian literature in this country. Vergani's taste, however, was not much in advance of that of the average educated Italian of the day, who read Metastasio and paid only lip-service to Dante.[1] Still, he gave what was wanted at the moment, and Cary proved a promising pupil. In March 1789 he contributed his first translation from Italian poetry to the *Gentleman's Magazine*—a sonnet "On the Rape of Proserpine," from the Italian of the Abbé Cassiani.[2] Though a mere exercise, it is competently rendered, and about as literal as can be expected in lyrical verse. Very soon he was endeavouring to communicate his new enthusiasm to his "Mistress," the Swan. She showed no readiness to follow his example and learn Italian, but for a time at least she smiled upon his studies and condescended to suggest that he might supply her with literal renderings in prose, to be "paraphrased" into elegant Sewardian verse just as she had dealt with Horace. Cary sent her specimens from Filicaia, Petrarch, and others, some of which she versified; but along with his versions the young scholar sent also a copious commentary, pointing out the untranslatable excellence of the originals, and suggesting

[1] Vergani published an Italian grammar in 1791, the preface to which contains the usual "vindication" of Italian literature; but in a catalogue of great poets he omits to mention Dante beside Ariosto, Tasso, and "our immortal Metastasio." The small selection of poems for reading includes two or three of Petrarch's sonnets, but nothing from Dante.

[2] Giuliano Cassiani (1712-78), of Modena. He is represented by this sonnet in the *Oxford Book of Italian Verse*. Cary later wrote a letter to the *Gent. Mag.* (June, 1790, p. 523) commenting intelligently on the pictorial effect in the same poem.

that a knowledge of Italian was indispensable to their due appreciation. Miss Seward began to have doubts. "I shall leave the Petrarch sonnet to Lister," she wrote; "I do not like to make my taste responsible for the selection of such affected composition, how great soever the name of its original." Here for the present the matter rested; as yet Cary's claims for Italian poetry were fairly modest, and they remained so until, at Oxford, he developed his eccentric and objectionable enthusiasm for Dante.

We have anticipated a little in carrying the account of Cary's studies down to the end of his schooldays. A few words remain to be said concerning his relations with Lister and with new friends in Birmingham. At the King Edward VI Grammar School Cary had the benefit of an excellent Head, the Thomas Price to whom allusion has already been made, and "whose name," Cary wrote in 1823, "I cannot mention without reverence and affection." [1] With his son Thomas, and with a relative of the Prices, Richard Wilkes, then also in the school, Cary formed a friendship which was continued at Oxford and lasted for life. For the present, however, he probably did not see very much of his Birmingham friends out of school hours, being still very much taken up with his "undying devotion" to Lister and Miss Seward—which after all did not wear so well as his much more prosaic Rugby and Birmingham friendships.

Lister, whom we left immured in "Mammon's cave," that is, the bank at Lichfield, was not to find life so very hard after all. The two friends contrived to see a good deal of each other during 1788, and by the end of the year

[1] *Life of Dr. Johnson*, in *London Magazine*, July, 1823. Reprinted in *Lives of English Poets*, 1846, p. 3. Price had been Head of Dr. Johnson's old school at Lichfield, and supplied Cary with an anecdote of the Doctor's revisiting the school late in his life.

Lister's stammer was cured by the expert attentions of a Mrs. Knowles. To his great joy and that of Cary (who celebrated the occasion in a set of amiable but absurd verses) he was allowed to abandon the sordid career of commerce for that of the law. His parents were still, however, a little nervous, perhaps not without excuse, about his enthusiasm for poetry ; and so they did not much encourage either his devotion to the Swan or his friendship with Marcellus. Finally, when it was decided that Cary should be sent to Oxford, Mr. and Mrs. Lister settled on Cambridge for their son. "This choice of different universities," remarked Miss Seward with just a shade of asperity, "is, I apprehend, purposed, lest the enthusiasts should feed each other's poetic flame."

The arrangement, if it was deliberate, proved effective. At Sidney Sussex College Lister formed new and less romantic friendships, and after 1790, though he seems to have kept more or less in touch with Cary, the old intimacy gradually lapsed. On succeeding his elder brother in the family estate, in 1805, Lister dropped the law and settled down at Armitage Park as a popular but commonplace figure in Lichfield society. He married twice, and having long since abandoned his own literary aspirations, had the gratification of seeing his son, Thomas Henry Lister, win some fame as the author of *Granby* (1826) and other popular novels.

Cary's college at Oxford, it was decided, was to be Christ Church. Early in 1790 he gained an exhibition of £35 a year from his Birmingham school. On April 29 of the same year he was admitted as a commoner of Christ Church, of which the famous Cyril Jackson was then Dean.

CHAPTER 2. OXFORD AND DANTE (1790—1796)

CARY's first experiences of Oxford did not impress him favourably. None of his school friends came up from Rugby or Birmingham till nearly a year after his arrival, and for a time he felt lonely and homesick. So prominent was the noisy and riotous "sporting set" at Christ Church and in the University generally that he must have wondered at first whether there were any real students at all in this town of "students." Within a week of his arrival he wrote to Miss Seward a letter now lost; but we can form an idea of it from her grandiloquent reply (May 18, 1790):

> In the fortnight which has elapsed since I had the pleasure of hearing from you, my friend, I hope you have discovered some congenial spirits, who rove academic bowers with dispositions suited to the purposes for which they were reared. The sons of vice and frivolity will affect to despise you for pursuits so far nobler than their own; but, when your genius and application shall have distinguished you in the public exercises, they will be taught to feel their own comparative littleness, and involuntarily revere what they are too stupid to emulate.
>
> I see you, in my mind's eye, wandering solitary on the banks of the Cherwell, whose coy graces the picturesque muse of Mr. T. Warton has so beautifully described. I wish you could procure the honour of an introduction to him. . . .

Unfortunately Cary never met the genial historian of

English poetry, whose great work did so much to direct his taste in literature. On May 20, perhaps the very day Cary received this letter, Warton had a paralytic stroke in the Trinity Senior Common Room; he died within a day or two.[1]

Miss Seward, however, had sent in the same letter an introduction to one of her Oxford friends, Herbert Croft, who had known Dr. Johnson and had written the life of Young for his *Lives of the Poets*. Probably Cary made use of this and similar opportunities of forming congenial friendships, and soon settled down pretty comfortably. Unluckily very little is known of his first year at Oxford, his letters having disappeared. We know, however, that one of his first acquaintances among the Christ Church undergraduates was a certain Edward Pye Waters, who had come up from a Berkshire Free School a year before. Though Cary is not likely to have met Waters before going up to Oxford, they had had some commerce through the *Gentleman's Magazine*, Waters having prophesied "Aramanthine fame" for Cary in one of the productions of what he called his "unpolish'd lyre." Waters, as the last-quoted phrase might suggest, was the kind of person Mr. Arnold Bennett would call "a card," and if he had not been born before his time might have proved as successful a business man as the immortal Denry. As it was, he died, at sixty-two, still a needy curate; and Cary and his friends called him "an original," and made merry for years at the expense of his cheerful, incompetent optimism. In his garrulous, nonsensical fashion Waters probably did a great deal to reconcile

[1] In his life of Thomas Warton, written about thirty years later, Cary incorporated one or two personal details gathered from "an Italian, who was acquainted with Warton"—(*Lives of English Poets*, 1846, p. 159). Probably this was Oliviero, Cary's Oxford instructor in Italian.

Cary to life at Oxford ; and in 1791 several more intimate friends came up. From Rugby came William Digby, who joined Cary at Christ Church, and Walter Birch, who went to St. John's. The three formed the nucleus of a decidedly studious and serious-minded "set," extended later to include other old Rugbeians—Digby's brother Charles, Edward Bullock, and Landor, who came up to Trinity College in 793. A minor "set," distinct from this, but in which Cary also moved, was formed by his Birmingham friends, Wilkes and Price, who matriculated at Christ Church in 1791 and 1792 respectively.

Before, however, we look a little more closely at Cary's Oxford friendships and his reading there, it may be useful to take some account of the conditions of University life and study at the period of his residence. The contrast is very marked between the care and attention which his Birmingham schoolmasters had given him, and the casual methods which he found were almost universal at the Oxford colleges. Cary's school preparation had indeed been exceptionally good. He came up to Oxford, at eighteen, with a knowledge of Greek and Latin in excess of that usual to-day ; and in addition he had a very fair acquaintance with French and Italian and was already widely read in English literature from Spenser to his own times. But at the University,—and his was no unusual case—the authorities left him pretty much to himself ; and the profitable use which he made of his time is to be credited rather to his own keenness and curiosity than to any academic guidance.

Despite abundant contemporary evidence and the labours of many historians, it is not easy to do strict justice in estimating the merits and defects, at this period, either of the University in general or of Cary's college in particular. Oxford had suffered severely during the troubled years of

the Civil War, and we must allow for this. Still, under the Hanoverians, both before and after 1745, politics filled far too large a part in the minds of the dons, and during most of the century learning appears to have stood still, while morals, until about Cary's time, moved backwards. The notorious passage in the autobiography of Gibbon, who spent fourteen months at Magdalen (1752-3), "the most idle and unprofitable of my whole life," cannot be explained away. The professors, according to Gibbon, had long given up even the pretence of lecturing or teaching; the fellows were "decent easy men," who had "absolved their conscience" from the trouble of reading or thinking or writing, and passed their time in smoking, drinking, and talking politics; the tutors were negligent, the students idle, dissipated, and often vicious.

Partial and even malicious as Gibbon's attack was, it cannot be denied that there are many other witnesses to confirm, in the main, his depressing picture of Oxford life. The most amusing, perhaps, is a collection of topical and satirical verses, *The Oxford Sausage*, published in 1764 under the (anonymous) editorship of that versatile don Thomas Warton, who knew quite as much about beer as about poetry:

> Some folks are drunk one day, and some forever;
> And some, like Warton, but twelve years together,

as one of the contributors puts it. Warton's mental energy, however, was exceptional, and he contrived to be a scholar of high attainments as well as a toper; but less able men seem to have observed the principle: "When work interferes with drinking, drop it." This, or worse, is pretty clearly reflected in pieces like "The Progress of Discontent," describing the career of a youth who comes to college with

a scholarship, becomes a fellow after nine years of tedious waiting, and then aspires to a wife and a benefice, which he gains only to lament the days

> When calm around the Common Room
> I puff'd my daily pipe's perfume !
> Rode for a stomach, and inspected,
> At annual bottlings, corks selected :
> And din'd untax'd, untroubled, under
> The portrait of our pious founder !
> When *impositions* [1] were supply'd
> To light my pipe—or sooth my pride ! . . .
> And every night I went to bed
> Without a *modus* in my head !

The life of the undergraduate is reflected with equal vividness in such pieces as the " Dialogue between the Poet and his Servant," or " The Lounger," in which the student's day is thus described :

> I rise about nine, get to breakfast by ten,
> Blow a tune on my flute, or perhaps make a pen ;
> Read a play till eleven, or cock my lac'd hat ;
> Then step to my neighbour's, till dinner, to chat.
> Dinner over, to *Tom's*, or to *James's* I go,
> The news of the town so impatient to know ;
> While *Law*, *Locke*, and *Newton*, and all the rum race,
> That talk of their modes, their ellipses, and space,
> The seat of the soul, and new systems on high,
> In holes, as abstruse as their mysteries, lie.
> From the coffee-house then I to tennis away,
> And at five I post back to my college to pray :
> I sup before eight, and secure from all duns,
> Undauntedly march to the *Mitre* or *Tuns* . . .

He staggers back to college drunk at one in the morning.

[1] Collegiate tasks. [Note in original.]

Here again, of course, there are deductions to be made, for even hard-working students have never been much inclined to boast of their studies ; but it tells much the same tale as Gibbon. E en as late as 1784 neither University was in much repute ; a casual remark this year by the poet Cowper, who was not given to judging harshly, is startling enough :

I do not think that drinkers, gamesters, fornicators, lewd talkers, and profane jesters,—men, in short, of no principles either religious or moral (and such we know are the majority of those sent out by our Universities),—*can* be dishonoured by a comparison with anything on this side Erebus.[1]

Yet by 1790 some reforms, at least, had been begun. Academic dress had been regulated, horse-racing and cock-fighting were proscribed, and the reform of examinations, which had long been a mere farce, was being discussed ; though the Examination Statute of 1800, which laid down the lines of the modern system, came too late to affect Cary and his friends. In this general movement Christ Church, under Markham, Bagot, and Cyril Jackson himself, took a prominent part. Earlier in the century it had been notorious as an " Augean stable " of immorality as well as famous for excellent Latin verse ; but about 1790 even Gibbon, though with an undertone of irony, admitted that

a more regular discipline has been introduced, as I am told, at Christ Church ; a course of classical and philosophical studies is proposed, and even pursued, in that numerous seminary : learning has been made a duty, a pleasure, and even a fashion ; and several young gentlemen do honour to the college in which they have been educated.

[1] Letter to the Rev. W. Unwin, Nov. 20, 1784.

Exactly how far reform had proceeded by Cary's time it is difficult to say ; probably the improvement in discipline and general " tone " went on more rapidly than the reorganisation of studies. In spite of the work of such men as Jackson, it does not appear that either the University professors or the college tutors were, as a body, more industrious or conscientious in 1790 than in 1750. Lord Holland, the nephew of Charles James Fox, and a contemporary of Cary at Christ Church, has little good to tell of the professors :

I knew few of the professors, nor did many of them give the undergraduates opportunity or inclination to cultivate their acquaintance by the frequency or excellence of their lectures.[1]

The Professor of Astronomy gave lectures, but " they were such as many a lad in a Scotch or foreign University, and many an itinerant teacher unmatriculated in any, could have easily supplied." A future Bishop of Bangor, Dr. Randolph, lectured on divinity with learning, but with so bad a delivery that " his supposed listeners were usually asleep." Of Mr. John Robison, the Professor of Mathematics, Lord Holland remarks pithily : " I never heard of his lectures, his pupils, or his examinations, and I shrewdly suspect he had none." Holland's Whig sympathies inclined him to be severe on Tory Oxford, but his facts are undeniable.

Some of the college tutors seem to have done more to justify their existence—Landor's tutor, " dear good Benwell," for instance—but here again it was mainly a personal matter, and many took their duties very lightly. Even Warton, it is said, used to send every term to his pupils " to know whether they would *wish* to attend lectures " ; and a

[1] *Further Memoirs of the Whig Party*, by H. R. V. Fox, third Lord Holland, ed. Lord Stavordale, 1905, p. 337.

student of Cary's own college who came up nine years later than Cary, but while Jackson was still Dean, has left this significant account of the college system of instruction :

When I first went [to Oxford] Greek learning was perhaps at the lowest point of degeneration. During the seven years of my residence there . . . I never received a single syllable of instruction concerning Greek accents, or Greek metres, or the idiom of Greek sentences ; in short, no information upon *any one point* of grammar, or syntax, or Metre. These subjects were never named to me. What I learned was struck out principally in my conversations with my two companions Symmons and Gaisford. . . . These two eminent scholars guided me to the proper sources of information.[1]

Hence it is not surprising that organised instruction, whether by college or by University officers, does not fill a prominent place in the Oxford careers of Cary and his friends. Landor, says his biographer John Forster, scarcely ever mentioned examination-halls or lecture-rooms, and his affection for his tutor did not, it seems, impel him to seek his advice or opinion about his Latin verses : " I showed my compositions to Birch of Magdalen, my old friend at Rugby ; and to Cary, translator of Dante ; to none else," he wrote of his Oxford days. Cary's silence on the same subject is probably also significant ; for from 1792 his surviving letters are fairly numerous. Later, indeed,

[1] Henry Fynes Clinton, quoted in *Christ Church, Oxford : An Anthology*, ed. A. Hassal, 1911, p. 93. Thomas Gaisford was the eminent Greek scholar who became Dean of Christ Church in 1831. John Symmons was the son of a minor poet and a scholar of some merit. Though both were junior to Cary he was well acquainted with them in later years. Much the same impression of College instruction is given by the bibliographer T. F. Dibdin in *Reminiscences of a Literary Life* (2 vol. 1836, i., p. 81 *sq.*) ; he says that lectures at St. John's about 1795 were " schoolboy proceedings."

he often looked back with intense affection to the institution which, he wrote in 1796, in the instruction gained there had imposed on him a debt "which I can never discharge." Yet he never mentions his official tutors, and Dean Jackson, for whom he retained the highest veneration, is the only official personage of whose academic relations with Cary it is possible to get any idea at all.

Plainly the future translator of Dante, like most favourable critics of Oxford in his day, regarded the University primarily as an institution supplying facilities for study rather than definite instruction. For Cary, as for most really remarkable men, this was enough; and the indispensable personal element, the clash of mind with mind in conversation, was furnished by endless evening talks among the undergraduates themselves rather than by any considerable personal contact with tutors or professors. This impression is at any rate not contradicted by any of Cary's later reminiscences, in which pleasantly regretful recollections of "evenings spent over a college fireside" are far more numerous than references to official functions of any kind.

It has to be admitted that Cary's French and Italian studies, in particular, received no encouragement at Oxford, and were carried on almost in solitude. Still, the casual, free-and-easy system of study prevailing in the Oxford of his day—so much in keeping with the century of *laisser faire*—had its advantages. School preparation was, sometimes at least, so thorough that before his University days began a young man might already be in possession of all the equipment necessary for independent study and research; so that Lemprière of Pembroke was able to begin his *Classical Dictionary* while still an undergraduate, and Cary was pursuing original research in early Italian and Provençal poetry several years before he graduated. We must remem-

ber, too, that the eighteenth century degree was in reality a social and not primarily an academic qualification. Degrees were given for residence, since it was assumed—perhaps too optimistically—that residence at the University implied a desire to study : and they might be refused on moral grounds, scarcely ever on academic. In those days the magic letters B.A. and M.A. were a guarantee of respectability rather than of learning or talent ; and even to-day irreverent outsiders have insinuated something of the kind concerning the pass degree. The eighteenth century, indeed, had not our modern respect for examinations ; it was sceptical of attempts to measure knowledge or ability quantitatively. Since the changes made during the nineteenth century began to have their full effect, disgruntled critics have not been lacking to suggest that after all perhaps the eighteenth century, with all its slackness, corruption, and vice, was nearer to the true idea of a University than the nineteenth or the twentieth.

We need not, therefore, think of Cary at Christ Church as entirely unlucky. Neither his friends nor any of the College Fellows shared his enthusiasm for Italian literature ; but at any rate he did not have to fit himself into syllabuses and examinations. Nobody interfered with him ; and this is perhaps as much as any man who insists on studying an unpopular subject can ever expect.

The Dean of Christ Church, Dr. Cyril Jackson, whose personality dominated not only " the House " but the whole University in Cary's day, is one of the minor puzzles of University history. Impartial accounts of him are not easily found. Tradition at Christ Church numbers him among the great Deans ; he was " a grand personage," of " magnificent and dignified presence," and possessed " those incommunicable gifts which go to make a great ruler." All

this is probably quite true. Jackson *was* a grand personage ; so grand, indeed, that "he became an object of imitation" to those whom he ruled. Later Deans tried to copy his handwriting, the pose of his head, the peculiar disposition of his long, slender hands, faithfully reproduced in the portrait which may still be seen in Christ Church Hall. Such was the affection which he inspired, so absolute the authority which he exercised that (we are told)

> when he appeared in the quadrangle every head was bared ; even tutors and censors removed their caps ; the college servants alone were directed to remain covered, to mark the distinction between them and members of the College.[1]

But that sceptical Whig, Lord Holland, thought that the Tory Cyril Jackson owed his prestige as much to certain "little artifices of manner" as to genuine benevolence ; and that although "a very honourable, disinterested, and warm-hearted man," his worship of rank made him a favourer of mediocrity. And Scott's friend, Kirkpatrick Sharpe, whose language is seldom as elegant as the dignified Lord Holland's, described Jackson as an "inspired swine," who "preached exceeding dry sermons with a prodigious degree of snuffling."

We must not take these irreverences too seriously ; yet even official historians admit that the twenty-six years of Jackson's reign (1783-1809) were uneventful, and that he did little upon which his successors could build. His greatest merit seems to have been his personal knowledge of the undergraduates. He took an interest in their behaviour, and even in their studies, and would frequently have five or

[1] Rev. H. L. Thompson, *College Histories : Christ Church*, 1900, p. 174.

six of them in to dinner. Cary was pretty certainly present at some of these parties, though his decidedly "advanced" opinions and his association with even more pronounced republicans like Landor and William Crowe, the Public Orator, probably did not much please the Dean. Politics could not be taken for granted in those days of anti-revolution panic, and it was hardly to be expected that the "young man of promise" chosen every year to accompany Jackson on a Long Vacation tour (expenses paid) should ever have been Cary or any other young Whig. In spite of this Cary got a good deal of profit from his personal contact with the Dean, who thus made up, in some degree at least, for his failure to encourage the young man's specific gifts or to procure for him, then or later, any solid advantage social or pecuniary. Cary's case is one among many which show that it was in personal and social matters rather than on the academic side that Dean Jackson's influence counted. He did something, indeed, to reform college instruction by inaugurating a system of collections or periodical examinations. In the *Memoir*, also, we hear of weekly essays prescribed for the undergraduates, the best being read aloud before the assembled members of the College. But in the total absence of "Honour Schools," and of a really effective tutorial system, it is not likely that these innovations made any real difference in the reading of the students.

In Cary's day, it is clear, the time-honoured division of College men into "sporting sets" and serious students was pretty strongly marked; though this did not of course mean that one group had a monopoly of sports and the other of learning. Cary and his friends walked, rode, and "feathered the oar," as he expressed it, for pleasure as well as for exercise; and the "sporting," which was also, as often since, the aristocratic set, included a number of men

afterwards famous for culture and administrative ability if not for profound learning. The future Whig leader, Lord Holland, found the atmosphere of Oxford as uncongenial as his son did after him, and was among those who passed most of their time there in amusements. His friends were nearly all lords; Lord Granville, Lord Carlisle, Lord Morley (then Lord Boringdon), and Jenkinson, later Lord Liverpool; a formidable list. With none of these, except Holland himself to a slight extent, had Cary anything to do in later life; nor is he likely to have known them well at Oxford. More interesting names among the members of Holland's circle are those of "Monk" Lewis, future author of blood-curdling tales and ballads, and George Canning, the statesman and moving spirit of the *Anti-Jacobin*, and a brilliant conversationalist and Latin verse-writer; but Cary cannot have seen much of either of them.

The plebeian and, on the whole, more serious-minded set at Christ Church included, as we have seen, Cary, the two Digbys, and Edward Bullock, with Birch as a frequent visitor from St. John's. All these finally became clergymen, and they had many tastes in common; but they were not unanimous on political questions, Birch at least holding decided Tory views. He had, William Digby told Henry Cary, "the highest opinion of your father's talents," but

used to contend with him a good deal in discourse and differ often in opinion, and now and then rather angrily, which your father took very quietly, and did not show himself very eager to refute; which habit of your father produced this remark from Birch to me some time after, "Cary, after having delivered his opinion, takes no great pains to maintain it, if you do not choose to agree with him."

This reflects a certain quietly humorous quality in Cary's

personal manner, a mildly critical detachment, of which we often hear later. It appears again in the way he reported some of his interviews with the Dean to his fellow-students. Digby is again our informant :

The dean advised him not to indulge his poetic pursuits too much, in writing at least, for the present ; but if, when he was older, between thirty and forty, he felt a strong inclination to write on any subject that much interested him, then to indulge in his vein. All this your father used to tell us in his peculiarly interesting manner, with perfect good humour, but certainly with a *subrisus*, which his countenance peculiarly expressed by the play of his upper lip, shortening and a little curving forward.

If in these arguments Birch was the one who lost his temper, he had his turn when that red-hot republican aristocrat Landor came up, in the year of the Terror, 1793, when feeling ran high between the opposing camps in the University. Landor, like Southey, who was then working in disgusted retirement at Balliol, at once made himself conspicuous by appearing with his hair unpowdered, the mark of a " black Jacobin." Birch, his chief intimate, whose affection for his friends ignored all differences of mere opinion, and who was by nature almost as gentle and unassuming as Cary himself, very soon gave up all attempts at serious political argument with Landor. The latter's brother Robert (also a republican, and known at Oxford as " Citizen Landor ") told Forster that " Birch often checked Walter's extravagant language by his laughter," and that he used to comment with friendly irony on the poet's opinion of Pitt as " the greatest rascal living."

Cary, as the intimate friend of Birch, saw a good deal of Landor in 1793-4. The three would often meet for a quiet stroll along Addison's Walk behind Magdalen, and occasion-

ally the whole Christ Church set spent an evening in Landor's rooms at Trinity. Cary was very probably one of those who witnessed the famous escapade which led to Landor's rustication.[1] In a moment of excessive high spirits the poet fired a gun at the closed shutters of a window opposite his own belonging to a man of Tory opinions. The whole affair was a mere frolic, and neither Landor nor any of those present had any real grudge against their victim, the "Duke of Leeds," who was the butt of Trinity; but it led to the disappearance of Landor from Oxford, and neither Birch nor Cary saw him again for many years.

Apart from Landor and Birch, Cary does not seem to have had many friends outside Christ Church itself. He met Southey once or twice in company, probably at Landor's rooms; but at this time Landor himself was but slightly acquainted with the future Poet Laureate. Among older men, Cary's best friends were both dons and both New College men. William Howley, then a Fellow of New College, was to become Archbishop of Canterbury and to baptise and crown Queen Victoria. He was a good friend to Cary in later years at the British Museum. William Crowe, the Public Orator, was a rather closer friend, whose acquaintance Cary owed to the good offices of Miss Seward. He was nearer Cary's social level than Howley, shared his advanced opinions, and was a good Latinist, a poet, and interested in poetry. At this time his *Lewesdon Hill*, the "topographical" piece by which alone he is faintly remembered, had lately appeared. Its influence on Cary's sole considerable poem of the period, *The Mountain Seat*, is unmistakable. Wordsworth and Coleridge admired *Lewesdon Hill* temperately, and Samuel Rogers, the banker-

[1] At any rate Landor himself said that "the rest of the company was mostly of Christ Church" on this occasion.

poet, extravagantly. Rogers, to whom Cary was no doubt introduced, now or later, by Crowe, was a great friend of the latter, and curiously enough studied his poetry beside Milton's as a model for his own blank verse. Crowe was something of an oddity in his way. The son of a carpenter, he had been a "poor scholar" at Winchester School, and at Oxford he remained a rustic and a sturdy anti-Pittite. In the early days of the French war he used to growl in his broad dialect that "if he could get no one else to cut off Pitt's head, he'd try and *do't himself*." [1] Normally, however, his manners were simple and modest, and Cary had a great respect and affection for him now and later. "A man who unites so much true genius and so much superior understanding to such unassuming manners and such sincerity of heart," he wrote to Miss Seward in 1793, "is very seldom to be met with." Dr. Parr, the Whig divine, expressed similar sentiments in rather different terms: when a lady asked him how he liked Crowe, he answered: "Madam, I love him; he is the very brandy of genius, mixed with the stinking water of absurdity." [2]

Amply supplied with his two chief needs, books and friends, Cary led a peaceful, happy, and outwardly undistinguished life at Oxford. His private reading filled much the larger part in his interests, but he also, says Digby, "regularly pursued that line prescribed by the habit of the college and the dean's direction for his college *collections*, as we termed it." This would involve merely the study of

[1] T. F. Dibdin, *Reminiscences of a Literary Life*, 2 vol., 1836, i. p. 245, note. Lord Holland declares that his republican sentiments caused him to be unjustly neglected by both the University and the Government; and in a letter of 1819 Cary suggests that his failure to publish much was due to "the want of more encouragement." Cf. *Memoir*, ii. p. 43.

[2] *Memoirs, Journal*, etc., of Thomas Moore, ed. Russell, 1853-6, ii. p. 180.

the better-known Greek and Latin authors, which presented little difficulty to a man of his attainments. He competed once for a College prize for an essay, but failed, partly it seems through misunderstanding the directions and being obliged to turn his English essay into Latin at the last moment.

It is clear enough, however, that the study of early Italian and Provençal poetry occupied most of Cary's time. Early in 1791 he contributed to the *Gentleman's Magazine* two short translations from the letters of Bernardo Tasso (father of the more famous Torquato), concluding his introductory note thus :

> Any communication that serves to throw a light on the circumstances alluded to in this and the other letters, or on any subject of Italian literature, will be thankfully perused by Yours, &c., M——s.[1]

This eager inquiry does not seem to have met with much response, even from outside Oxford ; but Cary was not entirely without assistance. He was able to continue his study of the language, as his son informs us, by " the aid or instruction of Signor U. Oliviero," concerning whom, however, nothing seems now discoverable. He *may* have been one of the official teachers of modern languages supposed to be attached to the Professorship of Modern History ; but this is doubtful for several reasons. Both the Professorship and the inferior posts, which George I had established from a purely political motive, had long since become sinecures, and the holders did not always even reside in Oxford. Moreover, nominally at least, the study of modern languages by undergraduates was actually forbidden : the motives for

[1] *Gent. Mag.*, 1791, Feb., p. 125 ; April, p. 309. The second is unsigned, but there can be no doubt of its ascription to Cary.

this odd prohibition seem to have been financial rather than academic or disciplinary. There were numbers of private tutors in modern languages, and frequent warnings were issued by the authorities against reading with them.[1] It is not likely, however, that these measures were very effective, and most probably Oliviero was one of the poachers on academic preserves.

We gather a good deal about Cary's enthusiasm for Italian poets from Miss Seward. By 1792 she was coming to regard him as a lost soul. To Christopher Smyth, "of Christ College, Oxford," an admirer who was translating one of her poems into Latin, she wrote in February of this year :

> I am chagrined to find our friend, Cary, grown an heretic to the high poetic claims of his country. His ear has been debauched by the luscious smoothness of Italian tones, till it delights no longer in the bolder and more majestic sounds of the English language. . . . Milton and Young justly tell us, that partaken pleasures are alone worthy of the name. The beauties of a language so little cultivated, must throw the gratifications they afford into an at least comparative solitude.

And she goes on to show that his new studies have without doubt "destroyed the health of Cary's taste and feeling," since he now prefers Petrarch to Young's *Night Thoughts*. Only Miss Seward, one feels, could have thought of the sententious Young as an English Petrarch. To the same correspondent she writes again, two months later, in a similar strain, quoting an obscure critic in support of her

[1] At Cambridge from 1781 to 1807 it was forbidden to read with *any* private tutor during the two years preceding B.A. This was, however, only partly effective. The state of affairs at Oxford seems to have been similar.

contention that a fondness for Italian poetry "vitiates the taste of young men." Smyth, who was well acquainted with Cary, read this to him, and he thereupon wrote to the Swan (May 7, 1792) the first considered remarks on Italian literature which we have from his pen. The contrast between this letter, the first written from Oxford which has survived, and the earlier correspondence is very striking. Though Cary was still under twenty, his style was already formed; moreover he was no longer in awe of the Swan. He makes short work of her "authority":

I much wonder that you should listen to the idea, that a fondness for Italian poetry is the corruption of our taste, when you cannot but recollect that our greatest English poets, Chaucer, Spenser, and Milton, have been professed admirers of the Italians, and that the sublimer province of poetry, imagination, has been more or less cultivated among us, according to the degree of estimation in which *they* have been held.

He goes on to explain, very sensibly, that the prejudice against Italian poetry (which Miss Seward, to do her justice, shared with many who knew a good deal more of the matter) was due to the predominance of the French over the Italian influence in our native literature since Milton. Addison and Pope merely echoed the opinion of Boileau concerning Italian poetry, "of which," Cary justly remarks, "he was incapable to judge." And then follows a memorable eulogy of Dante:

You must excuse this long tiresome piece of criticism, because I am pleading in defence of my own favourite fixed principles. Give a few months to the acquisition of Italian; go and see the wonders of Dante's Inferno, Purgatorio, and Paradiso; remember what a vast interval of time there is between Homer and him; remember in what a state the

country and age in which he lived, and how pure the language in which he wrote, and then abuse him, if you dare.

The significance of these words can be appreciated only by comparing them with some of the remarks made by others of Dante's few readers about this time. Horace Walpole called Dante "a Methodist parson in Bedlam"; and Voltaire never tired of exercising his wit upon the "divinité cachée" of the *Commedia*, "son poème bizarre." Among Cary's own contemporaries Wordsworth, Scott, Landor, Hunt, Hazlitt, and many others failed, in greater or less degree, to conquer their prejudices in forming their opinions of Dante; and the lectures of Coleridge, the first great English poet since Gray who understood the Florentine, were anticipated in the neglected work of an obscure country parson.

Cary followed up his patient argument with Miss Seward by giving, in the same letter, a literal prose version of two passages in the *Purgatorio* which he particularly admired. Cary's first recorded translations from Dante are interesting to read beside his later renderings in blank verse, and I give them in a note in case the reader is inclined to make the comparison.[1] Miss Seward, of course, was not convinced

[1] The first is the comparison of the excommunicated spirits to a flock of sheep (*Purg.* iii, 79-84): "As the sheep come out of the fold, some alone, others in pairs, others three together, the rest stand fearful, putting their eyes and noses to the ground, and whatever the first does, all the others do the same, crowding at her back, if she makes a stand, simple and tranquil, and yet do not know the reason why they stop, so this crowd of spirits stopt at our approach." The other simile Cary gives thus: "Speaking of the swift motion of a spirit that flew from them, [Dante] says, 'I never saw the lighted vapours at the beginning of the night cut the serene air so swiftly, nor when the sun is setting, the clouds of autumn.'" ("autumn" is a slip of the pen for "August.") The later blank verse rendering is an interesting example of Milton's influence on Cary's translation; cf. his note on the passage, *Purg.* v, 37-9.

either by his translations or by his arguments. She had plenty to say in reply, but we need scarcely trouble her any further. She never learned Italian. Cary's next letter to her, in the autumn, is about Godstow Abbey, and carefully avoids mentioning Italian poetry. By tacit agreement the subject was dropped for the next ten years. Though he retained some respect for her opinion—perhaps too much —Cary's discipleship to the Swan was now at an end.

The real interest of this rather absurd controversy, of course, is the light it throws on Cary's new and much more profitable discipleship—to Dante. By now he had studied closely the whole of the *Divina Commedia*, and in all probability had already conceived the idea of translating it into English, a labour which, surprisingly enough, no Englishman had yet carried to completion. Moreover, we learn from the same letter that he had also begun upon what proved not the least valuable part of his work, the collection of notes and illustrations to Dante :

I am infinitely delighted with Dante, as an historian of his own time ; so that I am collecting anecdotes, so plentifully interspersed among his works, for my amusement.

This very soon led him to widen the range of his studies considerably beyond the works of Dante and Petrarch, who appear to have occupied most of his attention during the first year at Oxford. Probably the famous passage in the *Purgatorio* (canto xxvi) in which Arnaut Daniel, "miglior fabbro del parlar materno," speaks in his native tongue, inspired Cary with a desire to learn Provençal. His curiosity concerning the Troubadours, aroused by this and numerous other passages in Dante and Petrarch, found little satisfaction in Warton's *History of English Poetry*, in which the writers of Central and Northern France received

far more attention than the poets of the South. And so Cary took the matter in hand himself, and delved about in the dusty tomes of the Abbé Millot and in Crescimbeni's *Istoria della Volgar Poesia* until he knew more of Guiraut de Bornelh and Folquet de Marselha than any Englishman since Gray, and probably more than most French scholars before Raynouard. The value of this study for his future work needs no emphasis; its immediate fruit was a series of three remarkable articles in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, in 1793, giving an interesting and workmanlike account, with specimens, of such Troubadour poetry as was then accessible.[1] The sole defect of Cary's articles, as pioneer work, lay in his failure to give any translation of the specimens, partly because, as he complains, the passages given in Crescimbeni were extremely corrupt. This, and the general ignorance of Provençal poetry at this period in England, accounts for their failure to attract any attention. They remain, however, striking evidence of the deep and exact scholarship of this surprising young man, who attained his majority during the month in which the last of them appeared.

Cary's remaining contributions to the *Gentleman's Magazine* during his Oxford years are, with one exception, of less importance.[2] They include a brief note on portraits of Chaucer, whose work Cary was studying with some closeness, and an article on the *Arabian Nights' Entertainments*, which, he wrote to his sister Georgina in 1793,

[1] *Gent. Mag.*, 1793, June, p. 520; Oct., p. 912; Dec., p. 1097; all are signed M——s. The *Memoir* ignores the third, which contains the interesting though of course very imperfect sketch of Guiraut de Bornelh.

[2] As they have not previously been identified I note them here: (1) 1791, Supplement, p. 1222, a sonnet on Darwin's *Botanic Garden*, signed M.C.S., probably Cary; (2) 1792, March, p. 212; (3) 1792, June, p. 532; (4) 1792, July, p. 605; (5) 1792, Supplement, p. 1190; (6) 1793, Jan., p. 7; (7) 1794, Feb., p. 120; (8) 1794, Sept., p. 783. All except the first are signed M——s.

" have not fallen in my way since I was a child," and which he read now in the French translation. Cary's comments introduce Plato, Pindar, Homer, Boiardo, and Cervantes, with perhaps a little too much parade of learning. He discusses the interesting resemblance between Shakespeare's Christopher Sly and Albon Hassan, the character rehandled more recently in James Elroy Flecker's *Hassan*. With an idea of following up this subject (the relations between Oriental tales and the literature of Western Europe) Cary dabbled a little in Persian and Arabic; but he does not seem to have pursued the study very far. Finally we may notice two contributions belonging to 1792, which show that he had been reading (in an Italian translation) the *History of the Art of Design Among the Ancients*, by the German archæologist Winckelmann. In a friendly controversy (arising out of some remarks in this work) with " A Foreigner," on the merits of English scenery and its effects on our literature, Cary takes occasion once more to lay stress on the beneficial results of our close relations with " the manners and literature of our Southern neighbours." His opponent (who may have been Vergani or Oliviero) gives a curious personal sketch of " M——s " which suggests he knew Cary : " He has frequently amused his readers with paradox," we are told, " and sometimes bewildered them with error " ; and though he has displayed a youthful fancy, he has much to learn. Cary justly retorted that the references to his " supposed youth " were beside the point; and another writer (" Remigius," possibly Crowe) appeared as his champion, denying that his articles contained " anything *fanciful, delusive, paradoxical*, or *erroneous*."

Mindful perhaps of Dean Jackson's advice, Cary wrote no poetry at Oxford until his fourth year. His Long Vacations were spent in walking tours, usually with Price

or Wilkes, in various parts of England and Wales. One of these, an exploration of the Wye valley in 1793, supplied the inspiration for the only poem written at Oxford which we need notice: this was *The Mountain Seat*, a descriptive and meditative piece in some two hundred lines of blank verse.[1] It has particular interest as not only the first but virtually the sole example of original blank verse by Cary, and in merit it so far exceeds all his earlier work as to belong to a different order of composition altogether. Here for the first time Cary threw off the affected sentimentalism and dreary personifications of the Seward school, and wrote in a style really natural to him. The result, in its placid unexciting fashion, has considerable merit.

A quotation from the *Paradiso* heads the poem, and no doubt we may trace to his reading of Dante a decided accession of strength in thought and expression and of exactness in natural description. In plan, however, the poem obviously derives from Cowper's *Task* (1785), by way of Crowe's *Lewesdon Hill* (1788), with which *The Mountain Seat* has much in common. Cary's poem, as well as Crowe's, belongs to a well-defined class, which Dr. Johnson, speaking of Denham's *Cooper's Hill*, had called "local poetry." "The fundamental subject," said the Doctor, "is some particular landscape, to be poetically described, with the addition of such embellishments as may be supplied by historical retrospection or incidental meditation." Thus in both Crowe and Cary we have the description of the scene from a particular hill,[2] the note of gentle meditation, slightly tinged with "reform" or Liberal sentiments, and the

[1] Published in *Gent. Mag.*, Feb., 1794, p. 161–2, and reprinted in the *Memoir*, i, pp. 55–60.

[2] I have not succeeded in identifying Cary's hill; but there is little doubt that he had a definite place in mind. Crowe's hill is Lewesden Pen, near Bridport, Dorsetshire.

sincere if perhaps rather obvious religious tone of the conclusion.

Cary's political sentiments appear very plainly in a digression on "the injured Pole," with a diatribe against Russia,

> that fell She-wolf of the North, whose fang,
> Ravenous and keen as the wide scythe of Death,
> Gores the fair bosom of thy land.

He is at his best, however, in descriptive passages. In the panorama of "wand'ring Wye," with

> Grey rock, or woody hill, or valley green,
> Tower or ruin'd abbey,

and in such lines as the following, it is easy to see how far he had left Miss Seward behind by learning from Cowper the usefulness of "keeping one's eye on the object":

> Mid yon tall elms, whence in light-wreathed curls
> The bluish smoke ascends, stands the full grange,
> And, like a smiling family around,
> The frequent cottage peeping thro' the trees
> Shows its white front. Thence onward to the west,
> E'en at the extremity of this brown heath,
> Direct thy sight to Manstey's stately wood.
> Proud of his variegated robe he stands,
> Tissue of thousand colours, richly wove;
> And the bright lustre that the sun behind
> Throws o'er his tufted plumes, illumined gold.

Wordsworth was soon to show that something more could be done with nature than simply to describe her correctly and gracefully. Still, there are people of respectable if old-fashioned tastes who can make little of the "types and symbols of Eternity" in the *Prelude* and the *Excursion;* and these would get about as much pleasure from *The*

Mountain Seat as from all but the very best of Thomson and Cowper. Meantime it was excellent practice for Cary in preparation for the blank verse of his translation of Dante.

Cary's vacation excursions had been fairly extensive even before 1793, if we interpret rightly his praise of English scenery in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, where he mentions North and South Wales, Herefordshire, Cumberland, and Northumberland. North as well as South Wales, at all events, he had certainly explored before *The Mountain Seat* was written, for the allusions there to Carnarvon, Festiniog, "the pebbly meer of Bala," and other places are clear enough evidence of personal observation.

An expedition in the summer of 1794, of which we learn only from later reminiscences, took him into Sussex, where at Eartham, not far from Chichester, Hayley was living in retirement. The poet, as the copious notes to his *Essay on Epic Poetry* (1782) attest, was an excellent Italian and Spanish scholar, and was able to give the young man useful hints for his reading; this, indeed, made Cary even more anxious to meet him than he had been five years before. Probably it was through Miss Seward that Hayley sent an invitation to Cary to pay the visit which the latter records briefly in his lives of Hayley and of Cowper. Two years before, the hermit of Weston had paid Hayley the high compliment of leaving his retreat to make a short stay at Eartham; and when, in his turn, Cary arrived, he heard quite as much about Cowper, and the edition of Milton which he was working on with Hayley, as about Italian poetry. Hayley displayed the same generous enthusiasm for his friend when Cary saw him again, a quarter of a century later:

When I visited Hayley at Eartham, he was full of Cowper and Milton; he led me to an eminence crowned with

laburnums, where his friend delighted to walk, and showed me the characteristic portrait of him painted by Romney. In twenty-five years more, when I found him in old age and solitude at Felpham, the same picture was before him and he pointed to it and said, "There is our idol." [1]

The autumn of the same year, 1794, Cary spent in North Wales with his friend Wilkes, and in Dublin, where, as often later, there were many family friends to be visited. Particularly attractive was the household of Mrs. Ormsby, who had been an intimate friend of Cary's mother. Her youngest daughter, Jane, had by 1794, and perhaps earlier, become an object of tender interest to the young scholar. We do not know much of Cary's courtship; but it seems to have been his first as it was also his last love affair. At any rate, it is most probably to some hitch in the course of true love that Miss Seward refers in a letter to Cary in March, 1794—though it is a little surprising to find her made a confidant in such matters:

Success attend all your pursuits and wishes—yes, I dare add, *wishes*, because I trust the dangerous days are passed, in which the inexperienced heart is prone to form those whose accomplishment must ultimately be far more painful than their present disappointment. "The stoic influence of the shady Academe, soon broke the bonds of imprudent love."

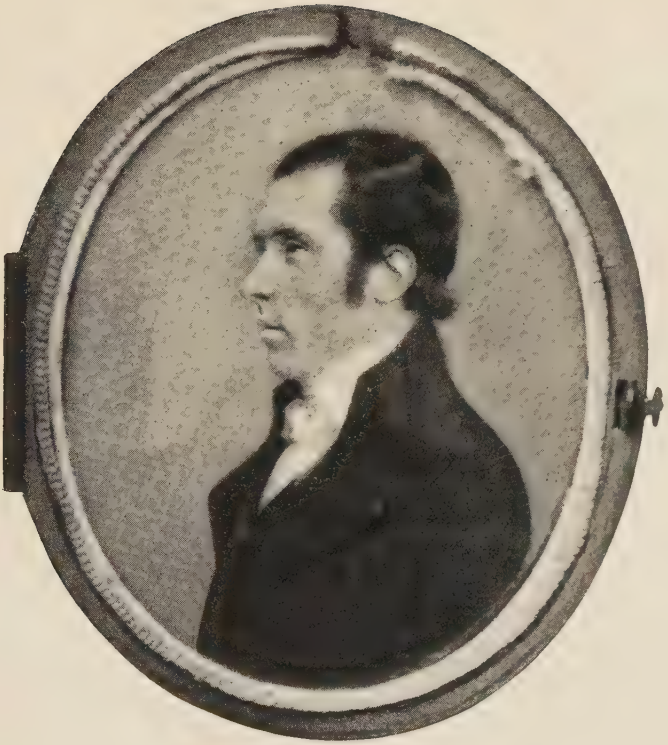
Probably the difficulty was simply that Cary had not yet any certain prospects of pecuniary independence, and felt

[1] *Poetical Works of William Cowper*, London, 1839 (ed. by Cary), "Biographical Notice," p. xiii. Cf. also Cary's *Lives of English Poets*, ed. 1846, p. 326-7. Cary was probably the author of an anonymous sonnet in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, April, 1797, p. 328, "The River Arun," in which the writer speaks of himself as "a passing pilgrim," and links with the names of Otway and Collins, the Sussex poets, that of Hayley, "him. . . who emulates Ferrara's sportive son" [Ariosto].

depressed at the length of time which must elapse before he could prudently contemplate marriage.

The choice of a career, in any case, was his main problem during 1794 and 1795. He had graduated in January of the former year, and probably remained at Oxford till the summer; in the spring he tried for a fellowship at Oriel, but was not successful. The next eighteen months were passed in a desultory fashion between study at Cannock, where his father now lived, and visits to friends at Dublin, Birmingham, and elsewhere. He took a somewhat surprisingly long time to make up his mind to enter the Church, a course which his father wisely favoured. A moderate income, beyond what assistance his father could give, was indispensable; and it was clear enough that a scholar's life was the thing for him. Yet, extraordinary as it seems, his first choice was the army. He said later that this wish was not due to military ardour, but to "a desire to visit foreign countries, and extend his acquaintance with modern languages." Yet there are indications of other motives equally powerful. He felt in prospect some distaste for "the curate's thankless toil," as he called it in some verses which he may afterwards have regretted. Moreover, it is possible that Cary may have felt doubts whether his personal beliefs were such as to justify his taking orders. His son Henry, himself a clergyman, does not enlighten us much on this awkward subject; but Cary, like many more, had read and admired Rousseau and Voltaire in youth, though he condemned them in later years.[1] Probably, without

[1] He read the *Nouvelle Héloise* first at sixteen (in 1788), and in May, 1789, he wrote: "Once again, I have been experiencing the delightful magic of that necromancer, Rousseau. . . His 'Eloisa,' and his 'Confessions,' made me admire, made me wonder at him, but his 'System of Education' has made me love him. The congeniality of our minds (particularly in matters of religion), which I



CARY AS A YOUNG MAN

From a miniature by Thomas Richmond.

travelling far from orthodoxy, he had gone far enough to feel disquieted at the thought of entering the Church. Indeed, having taken measures early in 1795 to follow his father's advice, he seems to have drawn back, and thought of trying again for a lay fellowship, with a view to taking up the law as a compromise between his father's wishes and his own. However, by the end of the year his father's forbearance had its effect, Cary's scruples were overcome, and at length his mind was made up. His doubts about religion, whether slight or serious, soon settled themselves, and in later life he seldom troubled himself concerning nice points of belief. He used to tell his own sons, when similar questions arose: "my father knew better than I did what course of life was best suited to me." Accordingly, in the spring of 1796, he was admitted to deacon's orders in the diocese of Lichfield and Coventry. Shortly after he took full orders and was presented by the Earl of Uxbridge, a friend of his father, to the vicarage of Abbots Bromley, a small village in Staffordshire.

The income attached to Cary's living, of which he took possession in May, was very small, but at all events it was certain, and marriage was now a possibility. He wrote without delay to Mrs. Ormsby asking for the hand of her daughter. Cary's son declares, with a certain naïveté, that the young lover's self-command "had been so great that he had kept the object of his affections in entire ignorance of his wishes, through a visit of several months for two successive years." Mrs. Ormsby was led to believe the same:

discovered in every page, at first frightened, and afterwards flattered and charmed me. I have always been a true Christian, but never knew it till I read the 'Savoyard Curate's Confession.'" Cary's son adds in a note that in later life Cary thought Rousseau's works "objectionable books to be placed in the hands of youth."

I showed her your letter [she wrote] and fairly told her the inconveniences attending such an union, as I saw she seemed very sensible of the merit that counterbalanced them. At the same time she told me, with her usual good sense, that, not having had the smallest idea that you honoured her by a preference, she never thought of you, but as a most worthy, sensible, agreeable man; and that she thought a more intimate knowledge was necessary, before she left all to follow you.

But I do not feel sure that the charming Jane was quite such a simpleton as the proprieties obliged her to appear. At any rate, the "more intimate knowledge," of which she spoke so demurely, took a surprisingly short time to acquire. The lover hastened over to Dublin, and there, within a fortnight (according to the most probable account), the marriage was solemnized at the church of St. Mary's, Donnybrook.[1]

Cary's Jane was not at all like Miss Seward. She was domesticated yet thoroughly intelligent and sensible, like one of Miss Austen's heroines. "She has a good natural understanding," her mother wrote, "health and good humour—no accomplishments except chattering a little French—is a very good work-woman and housekeeper. I pray God these moderate talents may content you."

Mrs. Ormsby's pious and sensible wishes were fulfilled.

[1] We cannot be quite sure of the exact date of the wedding. Cary's Literary Journal shows he was still at Abbots Bromley on August 8, and Cary's son gives September 19 for the wedding; but he is often untrustworthy, and a better authority gives August 20, which is possible, though it certainly seems a little soon. The parish registers of St. Mary's for this period have been lost, but the Visitation Returns preserved in the Consistorial Court at Dublin give the date as August 20. See *Brief Sketches of the Parishes of Booterstown and Donnybrook* . . . by the Rev. B. H. Blacker, M.A.: Third Part, Dublin, 1872, p. 284-5; also *Notes and Queries*, 4th Series, vol. vii., p. 137.

The young couple were to suffer many afflictions, but domestic disagreements were not among them. If the poet Shelley had known the Carys, he would have been obliged to admit that there was still something to be said for the despised institution of marriage.

CHAPTER 3. "PARSON PRIMROSE" AND THE *INFERNO* (1796—1808)

When Charles Lamb came to know Cary he made him an exception to his habitual dislike of clergymen, and described him as "a model, quite as plain as Parson Primrose, without a shade of silliness." The phrase would have been as appropriate in 1800 as it was twenty years later. Except that Cary's domestic troubles were less sensational, and that his ambitions were centred upon his translation of Dante instead of his sermons, Goldsmith's Vicar of Wakefield might pass for a portrait of the Vicar of Abbots Bromley. The resemblance extends, at any rate, to the unadventurous temperament of both fictitious and real parson; for Cary's hankering after a military career was soon forgotten in the joys of domesticity. Like Doctor Primrose, too, Cary was to pay dearly for a few years of happiness with undeserved misfortunes which, indeed, sweetened his nature and left him worthy to be the friend of "Saint Charles," but which also made him old before his time.

Cary's married life, however, began under the happiest of auspices; no misfortunes marred his later memories of the four years at Abbots Bromley, the most untroubled years of his whole life. Early in October, 1706, he brought his young bride home from Ireland and settled down to the quiet life of a country parson. The parish was small, pastoral duties were fairly light, and there was plenty of time for study and domestic pleasures. They were within easy

reach of Cannock, where Cary's sister Georgina lived with their father and stepmother and her pleasant young daughters, Charlotte, Caroline and Mary, Cary's half-sisters. Lichfield also was within a few hours' ride to the south, and visits were occasionally exchanged with Miss Seward and Lister. Birmingham, a little farther off, was sometimes visited for the purpose of meeting Humberston or the Prices, or of borrowing books from the library of Cary's old school. Now and then Birch, or Price, or family friends from Ireland would come to stay a week or two with the young couple. For the greater part of the time, however, they had each other only for company ; but they found plenty to occupy and amuse them. Mornings were spent by Cary in study, by Mrs. Cary in the house ; in the evenings there was talk of work and plans for the future, or Cary would read aloud to his wife. He had no intention of turning her into a bluestocking ; all the same, he believed in cultivating her mind. They began with something light—Anstey's *New Bath Guide ;* but their next was Sidney's *Arcadia*, not quite so light, though not inappropriate for a newly-married couple. Burke, Shakespeare, and translations of Herodotus and Thucydides soon followed. Mrs. Cary did not aspire to Greek or Latin—or even, it seems, Italian—but her French was kept up successfully by reading Molière and Boileau. With some of the latter's epistles they were both delighted, but the Abbé Barthélemy's *Voyage du Jeune Anacharsis*, which took them nearly three months to finish, must have seemed rather long. Still, the system of "associated studies" was quite successful, and Birch, who was now about to become a Fellow of Magdalen, declared himself so envious that only the bonds of self-interest could restrain him from "precipitating himself into matrimony."

In November Cary went to Oxford to take his Master's

degree, finding a bed in his old rooms at Christ Church, now occupied by Price. He dined with Birch and went to an excellent concert, but away from "dearest Jenny," as he wrote to her, he felt disposed to enjoy as little pleasure as possible, since she could not share it, and longed to be back "under our quiet roof at Bromley." A month later, again, he spent a few days in London on church business, sending home an exact account of every hour of the day, and ending his letter with an amusing touch: "I have just thrown the ink instead of the sand over the paper; however, it shall go, and will perhaps make you laugh. Adieu, sweet Jane."

Their first son, William Lucius, afterwards a captain in the army, was born during the next summer, and Cary expressed his natural hopes and fears for the upbringing of his child in a sonnet to Birch, which does much credit to his feelings if not quite so much to his poetic talents. In sending it to his "honour'd friend," and inviting him to Abbots Bromley for the ensuing Christmas, he wrote a letter part of which I give here:

It will be a delightful task to me to endeavour to repair the health which you complain of as injured, by not suffering you to indulge in those three things which cause its detriment —sedentariness, poring over books, and abstemiousness. The word *indulge* is not improper, even for the last, as you feel more pleasure in refusing the glass of wine than I in taking it, when it would be better for you not to refuse it.

Poor Burke, or rather, great and excellent Burke![1] You have already joined with me, Birch, in lamenting the greatest writer, and one of the most amiable and venerable characters of our age.

[1] Burke died on July 9, 1797, and this letter was written on the 18th. Cary's allusion to Burke in his *Ode to General Kosciusko*, which he mentions below, was in a note in which he quoted the "impressive strains" of the panegyric upon the liberation of the Polish peasants in the *Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs*.

Have you read a little poem I have just published? It is an Ode to General Kosciusko, of which the best that can be said, and perhaps all, is that it is a homage to one who deserves homage. I feel a sort of satisfaction, though but a poor one, in having mentioned Burke's name in it with respect, in that public manner during his life. You are happier in being able to say even *tantum vidi*. My friend Lister must be sorry for having treated him rather roughly in a political pamphlet he has lately published, called "A Mirror for Princes."

On Cary's poem something will be said presently. In December Birch duly arrived, to be entertained only with long walks among the green hollies of Needwood Forest, and evenings "divided between nursing and reading." There were no feasts and no dances, and though Cary was confident that an Oxford don would not regret the absence of the latter, he was not so sure that Birch's new dignity would prove favourable to "spare Fast, that with the Gods doth diet."

Little need be said of the remaining years at Abbots Bromley, in which nothing occurred to break the "even flow of tranquil pleasure" in Cary's existence. Except for the birth, in 1799, of their second child, a daughter christened Jane Sophia, almost the only incidents were business expeditions, to Oxford and London again, and holiday excursions to North Wales and Dublin. A letter written from London in May, 1799, gives a good idea of Cary's earlier impressions of the city which was later to be his home:

My Dear Jane,—You set me a hard task of writing you a long letter, which shall have as many letters in it as yours. In the first place, to reckon 'em would

be very tedious; and, in the next, I have not the art of prattling as you have, which however I like very much in you. There is so much to be seen and done in London that I have very little time to write. Besides the noise and hurry are so great that they disperse all that pleasant train of ideas which a more quiet scene would occasion when I thought of home. I have seen many fine pictures, and they have pleased me more than anything else I have seen. The Exhibition alone has more than a thousand, but many of them not very good. The room swarms like the threshold of a beehive. . . . But London is not the place to enjoy fine paintings. In short, I long for the country again. I have seen Henry the Eighth very well acted, and heard Incledon[1] sing exceedingly well; but not with that feeling which is with me a prime quality in a singer. . . .

We may now look a little more closely at Cary's scheme of studies during these years at Abbots Bromley. First to be noticed is the inception of his Literary Journal or register of books read, which dates actually from his first settlement at the vicarage a few months before his marriage. We have seen that at Oxford he began collecting notes to illustrate Dante. This undertaking now grew into a large "Commonplace Book," filled with notes and extracts from all manner of authors in half-a-dozen languages, carefully classified under various heads. This was the mine from which his notes to Dante, Aristophanes, and other authors were quarried. In addition, he now kept a more or less exact daily record of his reading, the Literary Journal which is printed in its entirety in the *Memoir*. The Commonplace Book is not accessible, and seems to have disappeared. Cary's

[1] Charles Incledon, a popular tenor then in his prime. He was said to be at his best in ballads like "Black-eyed Susan." Leigh Hunt and Crabb Robinson admired his voice but thought his manners vulgar.

son is not very lucid in his explanation of these enterprises, but a survey of the Journal suggests that it was often used as a kind of half-way stage to the classified Commonplace Book. Sometimes it is a bare note of books read or work done ; but frequently there is a short summary of a book, with brief extracts and critical comments ; and occasionally a note of a visit or a journey is made. A specimen entry or two will make this clear :

1797, *March* 22. Resumed Herodotus [Beloe's translation], and finished Thalia, with Jane.

March 23. Read the Alcestis of Euripides. The pusillanimity of Admetus in suffering his wife to die for him is a blemish in this beautiful and pathetic play. The imagination is awakened by the peculiar situation of Alcestis, who, without any previous malady, falls a prey to death in order to deliver her husband from his immediate intention of destroying himself. Continued Herodotus, and read Melpomene to s. 95, with Jane.

March 24. Translated a sonnet by Nicolo Gaetano in Crescimbeni.

The Journal makes no pretence to a consistent plan, and the critical comments, being presumably mere jottings, are probably, taken as they stand, a little misleading ; in later years Cary occasionally inserted a new comment or a correction of his former opinion.[1] Nevertheless, even for a period when reading was more popular than it is to-day, Cary's Journal is an extraordinary document, and careful study of it reveals a great deal concerning the amazing amount of work which went to the making of his version of Dante and his other translations. Cary had a vulture-like

[1] This is especially noticeable in his remarks on his favourite Plato, whom he read first in 1794, at Oxford, and last in 1841 : see, for example, *Memoir*, i, pp. 77, 161.

appetite for books ; he devoured all he could lay hands on, in Greek, Latin, Italian, French, English, and later in Spanish. Four plays of Aristophanes in a week, with several of Milton's prose tracts as makeweights, was nothing to him ; and he went through the whole of Muratori's bulky critical work, *Della Perfetta Poesia Italiana*, Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion* (read aloud), and the *Ars Rhetorica* of Dionysius of Halicarnassus (in the Greek, of course), in about a month. One further instance of his industry may be given : for a five months' *holiday* in Wales and Dublin, in 1800, he notes as a rough summary of his reading :

Read the second volume of Southey's Poems, Barrington's History of Henry the Second, Mémoires du Chevalier de Grieux. The Midnight Bell, a novel, Hayley's Triumphs of Temper, most of the Critical Works of Dionysius Halicarnassensis, the Hecuba of Euripides, in Porson's new edition, the first book of Hobbes's Leviathan, some of Filicaja's Poems, Bishop Taylor on the Liberty of Prophesying, &c., &c.

His passion was poetry. He read a good deal of history and theology,[1] and an enormous quantity of miscellaneous prose—novels, essays, travels and the like ; but these were, comparatively speaking, light reading. Poetry, and the criticism of poetry, formed his serious concern all through his long life. He made his confession of faith on this subject in writing to the poet Clare in 1824 :

Your admiration of poets I felt most strongly, earlier in life ; and have still a good deal of it left. . . . I find the

[1] In 1799, his son tells us, he studied the early Christian Fathers systematically ; but his favourite reading in theology was among the Anglican divines, from Hooker and Donne to Stillingfleet. Rather late in life Henry More and the other Cambridge Platonists became favourites : cf. letters of 1842, *Memoir*, ii, p. 326-7.

poetical part of my library is increasing beyond all proportion above the rest. This you may think a strange confession for one in my way of life to make ; but whatever one feels strongly impell'd to, provided it be not wrong in itself and can administer any benefit or pleasure to others, I am inclined to think is the task allotted to us here ; and thus I quiet my conscience about the matter.

From Homer to Wordsworth, from Dante to Ugo Foscolo, and from Aristotle to Coleridge and Hazlitt, there is hardly a single poet or critic of even moderate rank who is not down in Cary's list as read—not "dipped into," but read right through. His usual formula runs "began . . . continued . . . finished" ; and it is very rarely that, conscientious ever, he notes a "cursory" perusal. Before his thirtieth year he had read all the chief Greek and Latin authors through, many of them several times ; and in mid-life he fell back on Quintus Calaber, Coluthus, Nonnus, Andronicus Rhodius, and the like. Among his contemporaries only Peacock, with whom Nonnus was a favourite, can have approached Cary in the range of his reading in Greek ; and the novelist, though a good Italian scholar, had nothing like the translator's knowledge of Italian authors. Among these, of course, Cary made a close study of writers bearing upon Dante—Brunetto Latini, Dino Compagni, Fazio degli Uberti, and many others—besides reading every poet and critic of note in the whole range of Italian literature.

The Journal was not kept continuously, and there are many gaps after 1801, due chiefly to illness. In 1827 it ceases altogether, though we get plenty of glimpses of his later reading elsewhere. For the first five years after his marriage, however, the record is fairly full, and we are able to observe in some detail his early progress, at least, with the most interesting work noted in the Journal, the famous blank

verse translation of the *Divina Commedia*. On January 16, 1797, he notes "Translated Dante, Purgatorio, part of the first canto," and next day, "finished canto i of the Purgatorio." Cary began with the second of the three *cantiche*, no doubt, because like most closer students of Dante he preferred it to the *Inferno*, by hearsay impressions of which the poet is even now too often misunderstood. There was also the pleasure of breaking virgin soil; for no one had yet tried the *Purgatorio*, and Cary was well acquainted with Hayley's version of the *Inferno*, cantos i-iii, in the metre of the original, and must have already seen one of the two inferior renderings of the *Inferno* in other measures, which had appeared during his school days.[1]

By the middle of March Cary had done five cantos of the *Purgatorio;* but after this the entries disappear, and the work seems to have been laid aside for a year or two, perhaps because he wished to study the text (particularly the question of variant readings) more closely before going on.[2] Finally he decided after all to do the *Inferno* first, and in 1800, on May 23, he notes, "Resumed my translation of Dante, and translated half the first canto of the Inferno." Here for the present we may leave the Dante.

A less successful poetical effort also recorded in the Journal is the *Ode to General Kosciusko*, which does more

[1] These were by C. Rogers (1782), and the Rev. H. Boyd (1785): see Dr. Toynbee's *Dante in English Literature* for these and similar works. Cary does not appear to have seen Rogers's till 1814, but he probably heard of Boyd's from Miss Seward. Hayley's *terza rima* version is in the notes to his *Essay on Epic Poetry* (1782), already mentioned. Dr. Toynbee also reprints (i, pp. 468-9, 479) the Journal entries referring to Cary's progress with his translation; they are casual and very incomplete.

[2] In the later months of 1797 he was studying Venturi's edition of the *Purgatorio*, apparently for the first time. Venturi was an eighteenth century Jesuit commentator whom Cary came to consider "generally acute and lively" but often "impertinent and injudicious."

credit to Cary's enthusiasm for liberty and self-government than to his poetic gifts. The circumstances of its production were not favourable. Like the *Ode to Eliott*, it was intended to have a topical interest ; and being pressed for time, Cary had to get his materials from such books as were at hand, wrote his poem (about 130 lines) in three days, and printed it at his own expense, within a fortnight and unrevised.[1] The occasion of all this haste was the visit of Kosciuszko, the hero of Poland, to England in June, 1797. Cary had followed with admiration the career of this gallant and unfortunate soldier from his early days in America under George Washington to the life-and-death struggle for the cause of Polish independence which, after the successful defence of Warsaw against the Russians and Prussians, ended in the crushing defeat of Kosciuszko and his half-armed peasant forces at Maciejowice on the Vistula, in October, 1794. Kosciuszko, terribly wounded, was captured and taken to prison at St. Petersburg, and the third partition of Poland put an end to its hopes of independence for over a century. Two years later Catherine the Great died, and her slightly more generous successor, Paul I, at once released General Kosciuszko. Crippled and almost heart-broken at the failure of all his hopes, the General set out for America. Everywhere he was received as a hero ; and those who had merely lifted their eyebrows when Prussia treacherously joined Russia in the destruction of his country now gathered in crowds to gape at him. Little wonder that he showed some distaste for the celebrations. Perhaps

[1] *Ode to General Kosciusko, by H. F. Cary, A.M., Author of an Ode to General Eliott, Sonnets, etc.*, London, 1797, qto. Cf. Journal, *Memoir*, i. p. 113. The correspondence with Messrs. Cadell & Davies, the publishers, is in the Bodleian. Cary had 250 copies printed at a cost of only five guineas. The selling price was a shilling.

even Cary's ode, if he saw it, did not bring him as much consolation as the amiable author would have wished :

> Nor he who rears the temper'd laws,
> Nor who has tam'd the frequent foe,
> Is noble, as the hand that draws
> The sword in Freedom's sacred cause. . .

True enough ; but Kosciuszko had been in prison for two years, with five separate wounds, none too well tended ; and no amount of well-meant rhetoric could sweeten the memory of his ruined life-work. In any case, Cary, with all his haste, seems to have been too late ; his hero had probably sailed for America about a week before the *Ode* made its appearance. In spite of his wounds, Kosciuszko lived for twenty years more, returning to Europe on the rise of Napoleon in the hope of snatching some measure of freedom for his country out of the victories of the French republic. He was soon undeceived, and though he toiled as unselfishly at the uphill work of diplomatic intrigue as he had at the nobler game of war, he got nothing either from Napoleon or from the politicians at the Congress of Vienna. He died in 1817, an exile to the last from his country. Perhaps he was not a great general ; but he was a great man.

Cary's *Ode to Kosciusko* presents no striking features. It contains all the usual sentiments—praise of Kosciuszko and of King Stanislaus of Poland, censure of Russia and Prussia, the "regal minions" of tyranny, and of England for permitting the negro slave traffic. But it is a sad relapse after *The Mountain Seat*. "Its style and structure," says the *Memoir*, "are in the highest degree Pindaric." Cary had, of course, even as a schoolboy, read Pindar (a lifelong favourite) for himself ; but so

powerful was the effect of Gray's Pindaric Odes that for half a century and more no one could try to imitate Pindar in English without also imitating Gray. Cary's ode is far too "poetic"; and sincere though its sentiments are, it has an air of dreary bookishness but faintly relieved, here and there, by a tolerable phrase or two coming a little nearer to the gnomic generalisations of the elder Greeks:

> O Providence! thy ways are dark,
> And beyond reach of mortal eye:
> Nor may he hope to reach the mark,
> Who shoots conjecture's shaft so high.

Cary soon became conscious of the imperfections of this production; in writing to Birch (December 11, 1797) he says:

> In your criticism on my Ode I see and acknowledge with gratitude the "animum censoris honesti." It will induce me in future to place myself under the same wholesome severity, before publication shall have made that severity in some measure useless.

He kept his word so effectually that this was the last of his original pieces to attain independent publication.

The present is, perhaps, as suitable an occasion as any for saying something of Cary's talents as a preacher, which, though they were not such as to win him either preferment or notoriety, he continued to exercise competently and conscientiously during most of his life. He thought little of himself as preacher, and never published a regular volume of sermons; but an odd chance has preserved in print three sermons belonging to the Abbots Bromley days. Pye Waters, the "original" friend of Price and Cary whom we met at Oxford, was in 1800 a curate at Great Barr, a village not many miles from Abbots Bromley. As always,

he was in a state of chronic impecuniosity, but incurably optimistic, and full of plans for winning fame and fortune. One of his projects was the familiar notion of publishing a volume of sermons by subscription; but in this instance Waters redeemed his character of an "original" by begging the sermons—a dozen or so—from the charity of his friends, and publishing them as his own work. This occasioned much merriment among Cary, Price, and Wilkes, who were all laid under contribution; and Cary seized the opportunity of reviewing himself in the *Gentleman's Magazine*.[1] On one of his three sermons he remarks with mock asperity that "it is by far the shortest in the collection," though the theme "might well have afforded a more copious harvest." He ends with a sly dig at Waters: "If (as we trust is the case) the moral endowments of the man are proportioned to the literary talents of the author, he has our best hopes for success in his profession." Waters secured among his subscribers the entire Cary family, Lister, and several of the Landors; but whatever the profits, they did not set him on his feet. He went on muddling, talking, and serving curacies for the rest of his life. A line in Foster's *Alumni Oxonienses* might serve as his epitaph: "Curate of Overbury, Co. Worcs. at death, 1833."

Such were the odd circumstances of Cary's sole appearance in print as a sermon-writer. His three discourses, on "Industry," "The Sabbath Day," and "The Works of Nature," though not lacking in feeling, are severely plain, workmanlike talks, clear and simple in language, but sounding with a slight touch of stiffness to modern ears. One or two illustrations derived from Plato are the sole indications

[1] *Gentleman's Magazine*, Sept., 1800, pp. 867-9. Cary's authorship is proved by an allusion in the *Memoir*, i, p. 316. The book appeared in 1800 as *Sermons on Various Subjects, by Edward Pye Waters, A.B. . . . Birmingham.*

of Cary's tastes in reading. We might in fact be surprised at the almost complete absence of literary allusion or quotation did we not recollect that this was a century before universal elementary education made the names of Shakespeare, Milton, and several other poets familiar to all ; and that Cary lived before Browning came to supply the hundred best pulpit quotations. In Cary's day, as in Chaucer's, the "poure persoun of a toun" frequently regarded his parish duties as more important than the preparation of elaborate sermons. This point of view is not without its attractions. A passage in a letter of advice from the poet Southey to a young churchman, James White, presents it very sensibly :

> There are hardly more than half a dozen pulpits in the kingdom in which an eloquent preacher would not be out of his place. Everywhere else, what is required of the preacher is to be plain, perspicuous, and in earnest. If he feels himself, he will make his congregation feel. But it is not in the pulpit that the minister may do most good. He will do infinitely more by living with his parishioners like a pastor ; by becoming their confidential adviser, their friend, their comforter ; directing the education of the poor, and, as far as he can, inspecting that of all.

This describes pretty correctly Cary's practice at Abbots Bromley and Kingsbury. As long as his health permitted, he was indefatigable in the homely and unexciting, but supremely useful services of the parish, services none the less meritorious for providing little material of interest to a biographer.

The publication of the Pye Waters sermons coincided with the close of Cary's happy life at Abbots Bromley. His first move, however, was a matter of little more than twenty miles. In 1800 his slender means were slightly increased by the gift of a second living, the vicarage of Kingsbury in

Warwickshire, not far from his old home at Sutton Coldfield. The new living was in a pleasanter district than Abbots Bromley, and had a much better house—"a neat little vicarage close to the church, on the brow of an eminence and commanding a delightful view of the Tame valley," as Cary described it—and he therefore decided to move his household to Kingsbury. By November the change was completed, and the curacy of Abbots Bromley was entrusted to Price, who had now left Oxford and taken orders. Four years later the ties of intimacy between the friends were drawn even closer by the marriage of Price and Cary's sister Georgina.

The first event at Kingsbury was the birth of their third child and second daughter, Harriet. In the summer of 1801 Mrs. Cary went to visit her parents in Dublin, leaving her husband for a whole month to tend his parish and his two little daughters unaided. It was the first time that they had been separated for more than a few days; and Cary's long letters on the occasion give pleasant glimpses of the affection between husband and wife. Consolers were not lacking: "I am much pitied," he writes; and with visits from his sister Georgina and his friend Edward Bullock, fishing expeditions with Dr. Humberston (the "Tityrus" of earlier days), and excursions to Abbots Bromley and Lichfield, the time passed endurably. A few extracts (pieced from several letters) may be given to complete the picture:

My Dearest Jane,—I am happy to have the same story to repeat about our babes, who are as well as when you left them. Jenny keeps close to me as if to give and take comfort for your absence; for though she does not talk much of it, yet like other silent folks she does not feel the less, if I may guess from a little dejection

I sometimes see about her. Harriet [six months old], I must own, appears not only unconcerned, but much gayer than she used to be. I have just parted from her with her mouth and nose drawn up on one side, and snifting through the latter, which you know is the highest elevation of her mirth and gladness. . . . They begin to play very prettily together, or rather Jenny has found out the art of amusing her sister, who laughs very heartily at her tricks. She is indeed a pattern for little girls, very sociable without being the least troublesome, and as submissive as either a father or a husband could desire. . . .

Yesterday Mary announced to me in due form that Harriet had cut another tooth ; and as she was not inclined to exhibit it to me, I took Mary's word for it. . . .

How, my dear love, can you suppose that my home can be equally cheerful during your absence ? That it is not sometimes absolutely dull is owing to the efforts I make to render it otherwise, that I call off my thoughts to my books, that I amuse myself with the children, that I indulge myself with the hopes of your speedy return. . . .

I find it requires all my philosophy to bear your long absence, and think of the moment that is to reunite us without any philosophy at all. . . .

In due course Cary went to Holyhead to meet his wife, and there was a joyful reunion. But this happiness, unfortunately, was not to last. Five years of unbroken prosperity were followed by fifteen of misfortune almost as little varied ; and the twenty years which were still to elapse before Cary emerged as a successful man of letters in London society added far more than the normal amount to his burden of sorrows. With his retiring nature and almost morbid sensibilities, Cary had always been disposed to take a sober view of life : " Happiness," he declares in one of the Pye Waters sermons, " consists rather in freedom from inconveni-

ence and pain, than in the positive enjoyment of pleasure." It is a common enough sentiment; but not among those who, like Cary when he wrote this, have not yet verified it by experience. Within a year or two, at any rate, he was to find such happiness the best he could even hope for.

The first shadow of impending trouble had appeared just before the birth of Harriet, in February, 1801. Mrs. Cary's brother, George Ormsby, a naval officer of promise, died suddenly, and Cary prudently decided to withhold the unwelcome news from his wife until after her confinement. The innocent deception proved quite successful, and Mrs. Cary suffered no serious effects; but Cary felt very deeply the irony of such a situation:

> I cannot easily describe to you [he wrote to Price] what my feelings have at times been on this occasion. I have shrunk with terror at thinking of the knowledge of those superior beings who, while they behold the happiness and gaiety of us miserable mortals, at the same time can see every grim calamity that stands by our side, and is about to strike us to the ground.

After this we need not wonder that later and closer bereavements had such serious results.

It is not, perhaps, either very surprising or altogether unfortunate that the period in Cary's life which we are now approaching is that of which the records are most scanty. The Journal lapses almost entirely between 1801 and 1811, and most letters seem to have vanished; Henry Cary, from a not unnatural desire to pass lightly over his father's illnesses, particularly in their mental aspect, probably suppressed a good many. We know enough, however, to trace the main course of events; and no more than this seems required, except on the literary side, where our material is fortunately a little more abundant.

Physical ill-health was Cary's first trial ; it was in 1802 that he began to suffer from various obscure complaints which pursued him intermittently for ten years. For this and the following year we can do little more than quote the brief account in the *Memoir :*

Repeated returns of illness interrupted his usual avocations. Of the nature of his ailments I am unable to speak with accuracy : sometimes he alludes to his being afflicted with gravel, at others he complains of vertigo as disabling him from study or business. His friend, Birch, in a letter dated January 31, 1803, congratulates him on his "recent recovery." Again on March 1 of the same year he says, "I am sorry to hear of your slight relapses." In the Easter following, however, he was sufficiently recovered to receive a visit from Mr. Birch. But another attack must have followed not long afterwards, for in a letter to his sister, dated Sept. 1, 1803, he writes, "I am bravely."

Towards the end of 1803 the clouds lifted for a while, and in 1804 he was almost his old self. In October of that year his friend Wilkes, now a Staffordshire rector, joined him in a week's excursion to Cambridge, where they greatly admired the appearance of the colleges by moonlight. Trinity did not seem equal to Christ Church, their own college at Oxford, in "sublime effect," but King's College Chapel was incomparable :

Where shall I find words to express my admiration and delight ? [Cary wrote to his wife]. As I stood almost close under it and looked up, it reminded me of a description in Milton,

"A rock
Of alabaster piled up to the clouds."

The other buildings seemed like toys after it.

Cary, a devotee of Gray, did not omit to make a pilgrimage to the poet's rooms at Pembroke, which they were shown by one of the servants who had helped to carry Gray out of Hall when he was suddenly seized with the fit which led to his death.

If the ghost of Gray, flitting about Cambridge, overheard some of Cary's eager discussions with his friend concerning the work one stage of which was now nearing completion, it must certainly have smiled approval ; for Gray, like Cary, had worshipped Dante in an age when he was neglected and almost forgotten. By the date of this visit to Cambridge Cary must have finished his translation of the *Inferno*, which, begun as we have seen in May, 1800, had been carried forward slowly but steadily during intervals of respite from sickness, and by the autumn of 1804 was ready to be offered to a publisher. The ensuing winter was occupied in getting out the first volume, containing the first seventeen cantos of the translation, with the Italian text printed on opposite pages. This was actually the first edition of the original to be printed in England.[1] Walter Birch, writing to Landor in April, 1805, gives us our earliest intimation of the appearance of this first instalment :

Our friend Cary of Christ Church published about a month ago a translation of the *Inferno* of Dante, which I am just about to read. I anticipate considerable pleasure from it. I hear already that it sells well.

Landor's opinion at this time is not recorded, but from a

[1] Cary's title-page was : *The Inferno of Dante Alighieri : Canto I-XVII. With a translation in English blank verse, notes, and a life of the author. By The Rev. Henry Francis Cary, A.M. London . . .* 1805. (8vo.) Vol. II, containing Cantos XVIII-XXXIV, is dated 1806. The notes are placed at the end of each canto. The price of each volume was 8s. in boards.

number of allusions in later years it is clear that he thought highly of the translation from the first.

Another friend who, to begin with at any rate, smiled on Cary's undertaking and was confident of its success, was Miss Seward, who had corresponded with him pretty regularly since the Oxford days. Writing on June 13, 1805, to the Hon. Sarah Ponsonby, one of that famous and eccentric pair the "Ladies of Llangollen" (with whom she was intimate, and whom Cary also knew slightly), she praises in the old automatic fashion the poetic efforts of her friend :

> Our young friend Cary has published his translation of Dante's Inferno. It is thought the best which has appeared, and the sale goes on well. He presents a copy to yourself and Lady Eleanor, and I trust you will receive it soon. . . I trust Cary has done justice to his original, since in his numbers the poetry is often grand. What a triumph for the muses, and for the rising century, that one year has produced the best translation extant of a classic so renowned, and two such original epic poems, as the Lay of the Last Minstrel, and the Madoc !

Events, however, did not bear out these sanguine expectations ; and a year later, when the second volume, completing the *Inferno*, came out, Miss Seward herself, recollecting her old grudge against Italian poetry, began to write in a very different strain.

Dante, indeed, was no more a "renowned classic" in 1805 than in Cary's Oxford days a dozen years before—unless in the sense that he was taken for granted and left unread. Voltaire's famous gibe, "Sa réputation s'affermira toujours, parce qu'on ne le lit guère," bade fair to justify itself ; and Cary's volumes were almost entirely ignored. There could be no stronger contrast than that between the

discriminating enthusiasm with which Cary speaks of his author and the apologetic, patronising, or contemptuous language of other translators of this period, or of such of the reviews as deigned to give Cary any attention at all. Henry Boyd, whose scandalously "paraphrastical" version of the *Commedia* appeared in 1802, printed with it a defence of the "venerable old Bard" in the orthodox condescending strain of the eighteenth century dilettante. The *Critical Review*, in March, 1803, gave Boyd a qualified approval, remarking that "the dulness of Dante is often enlivened by Mr. Boyd with profuse ornaments of his own, by which he is rather elevated than degraded." The *Literary Journal* preferred Boyd to Cary, and the *Edinburgh Review*, the most influential of the periodicals, praised Boyd in 1803 and entirely ignored Cary in 1805. Plainly Dante did not yet interest the public.

Cary's attitude is very different. In his "Advertisement" he censures Boyd's version, though too mildly, for taking "so great a latitude in its interpretation," and states his own intention, "to facilitate the study of one of the most sublime and moral, but certainly one of the most obscure writers in any language." The "Life of Dante" which follows has, of course, long been superseded as a record of fact; but it is generally agreed that Cary's was the first attempt of its kind in English upon which later scholars could build, and the critical parts at least are not seriously out of date even to-day. Cary seizes by a happy instinct on the essential points in the relation of Dante's work to Italian poetry and the literature of Europe in general; after the stupid and misguided attempts of earlier critics to measure the *Commedia* by the "rules" of epic poetry, it is a relief to find Cary insisting that the proof of the pudding is in the eating:

It would be difficult to assign its place according to the received rules of criticism. We cannot properly term it either an epic poem or a satire. It is sufficient that the work seizes on the heart by its two great holds, terror and pity, detains the fancy by an accurate and lively delineation of the objects it represents, and displays throughout such an originality of conception as leaves to Homer and Shakespeare alone the power of challenging the pre-eminence or equality.

The practical purpose of Cary's blank verse rendering is defined in strict accord with the principles of translation which we found him professing as early as 1789 :

I have aimed at not only adding to the original text a translation so faithful, as, with the assistance of the notes, to enable one moderately skilled in the Italian tongue to understand my author, but at producing a work which shall not be totally devoid of interest to the mere English reader.

How far Cary was successful in reproducing both the letter and the spirit of the original we shall consider in some detail later on ; but it is a curiosity worth mentioning here that, whereas some later scholars have condemned Cary for taking unwarranted liberties with his author, what chiefly struck his contemporary critics, whether friendly or the reverse, was the " rigid exactness " of his translation. This phrase is from one of the two long (and on the whole favourable) notices which Cary's friend Price, who dabbled a little in journalism, contributed to the *Critical Review* in 1805 and 1807 ; and it is echoed by an unfriendly critic in the *Literary Journal*, who describes Cary's rendering as " almost word for word." [1] So surprisingly do the standards of fidelity in translation vary from age to age.

[1] *Critical Review*, 3rd Series, Oct., 1805, p. 113 ; July, 1807, p. 267 : *Literary Journal*, 1805, p. 1087-8. Extracts from the latter are given in Dr. Toynbee's *Dante in English Literature*,

In spite of the encouragement of friends and the apparently favourable auspices under which it appeared, the translation, ignored or misunderstood by the reviews, did not sell; and Cary, in his son's words, "had to endure the mortification . . . of seeing the fruits of many years of toil received with coldness and indifference." This was bad enough; but he might well have echoed Cæsar's reproach to Brutus when Miss Seward, in 1806, reconsidered her verdict and let loose the flood of her eloquence upon poet and luckless translator alike. It would be absurd to take her criticisms seriously, but she had public opinion, or most of it, on her side, and the correspondence is of some interest as evidence of Cary's stout-hearted determination not to be bullied out of his conviction both of the merits of Dante and of the fidelity of his interpretation.[1] Her vague general objections to Dante's work—"everlasting egoism," "infelicity of plot," "presumptuous malice" and the like—are of a familiar kind, and Cary does not attempt to argue against them; he merely mentions that Milton, at least, thought otherwise, and adds significantly "it is so much a matter of taste." Her more definite charges, of frequent vulgarity of expression in Cary's blank verse, and of "inflated and dense obscurity" in the original, he answers categorically, explaining some, reducing many to absurdity by citing parallels from Shakespeare or Milton which show an extraordinary power of recollecting the minutest details of expression in those poets. Thus to her censure of the

i, pp. 672-5. Birch writes to Landor in November, 1805, in a similar strain: Cary's version, he says, "considering its very close adherence to the original, seems to me more elegant than I could easily have conceived."

[1] Miss Seward's first letter (Aug. 7, 1806) is in her *Letters*, vi, pp. 301-305. Her second, and Cary's two replies, are in the *Memoir*, i, pp. 227-246.

omission of "thou" with the verb in phrases like "Wherefore troublest me?" and her declaration that Shakespeare seldom does it, and Milton never, he at once retorts with four instances from Milton and ten from Shakespeare, and briefly states the obvious justification: "When the dialogue is quick, vehement, unceremonious, passionate, then the omission of the pronoun has generally a good effect."

It would be tedious, though it might heighten our opinion of Cary as a verbal critic, to follow him as he toils patiently through her formidable list of "obscurities," explaining, as to a dull pupil, that "a *seal* to undeceive" in canto xix signifies "attestation or rather confirmation," that "Qui vive la pietà quando è ben morta" in canto xx is not more of a bull than Milton's line "the fairest of her daughters, Eve," and that anyhow it is no business of a translator to "amend" such expressions. After several pages of this, he concludes, a little tartly, by "humbly praying" that he may not have to "answer as many more objections." Miss Seward died before any more of the translation was ready, or his prayer might have been in vain. In her last letter to Cary, in 1807, a long and amusing account of Walter Scott's visit to her, she betrays a malicious pleasure in reporting the lack of enthusiasm for Dante displayed by "this proudest boast of the Caledonian muse," as she calls him:

He had heard of your translation, but not read it. On looking at a few passages, and comparing them with the original, he said there was power and skill in having breathed so much spirit into a translation so nearly literal; but he confessed his inability to find pleasure in that author, even in his own language, which Mr. Scott perfectly understands. The plan, he said, appeared to him unhappy, as it was singular, and the personal malignity and strange mode of revenge, presumptuous and uninteresting. However, he promised

to examine your English version more largely when he could find leisure.

We must now return to the story of Cary's family life during these years. By 1807 the Kingsbury household had grown considerably in numbers. Three sons had followed Harriet at short intervals ; James Walter was born in June, 1802, Henry, the author of the *Memoir* of his father, in February, 1804, and Charles Thomas in 1806. The last was still an infant when, early in 1807, several members of the family fell victims to a local epidemic of typhus. In May Cary himself had just recovered from a severe attack when his younger daughter, Harriet, succumbed to the same complaint at the age of six years. This was Cary's first bereavement since the death of his mother thirty years before ; and his extreme sensibility proved unequal to the strain : " mind and body," says his son, " both fell prostrate at the blow." For several months this voracious reader was utterly incapable of fixing his attention on any book, and all mental occupations had to be suspended. Cary's mental diseases seems to have taken the form of an intermittent paralysis of the will-power, resulting in complete helplessness. In its outward effects it reminds us of the mental breakdown of Scott and Southey ; but in its intermittency and the completeness of recovery between the attacks it has more in common with such cases as those of Mary Lamb and the poet Clare. Upon the whole, however, Cary's was a much milder complaint than any of these ; it recurred only three or four times in thirty years, and it was never necessary to remove him from the care of his family. This first attack was mastered some time before October, 1807, when he was able to write a long letter to Birch ; and in this he reports considerable progress with the

Dante, which, refusing to be discouraged, he had continued at intervals since the publication of the *Inferno:* "I have nearly reached the end of the Purgatorio." He also announces a decision which was to have a great effect on the course of his life, namely, the removal of the Cary household to London. It had already been necessary to pay a visit to the metropolis to obtain medical advice on Cary's health, and it was now settled that a permanent residence there would best meet the needs of his family. In London the attention of specialists was to be had whenever it might prove desirable; and there also, at Westminster School, it was intended to continue the education of Cary's eldest son William.

It was in this way that, with better excuse than most clergymen of his time, Cary became for the rest of his life an absentee vicar. His friend Price undertook to keep an eye on the curacies of Abbots Bromley and Kingsbury, and early in 1808 Cary left Kingsbury for ever and settled in lodgings in London.

CHAPTER 4. LONDON: COLERIDGE AND THE DANTE (1808—1819)

In 1808 Cary was exactly "nel mezzo del cammin di nostra vita," or at any rate, since he lived seventy-two years and was now thirty-six, the figures come near enough to Dante's meaning. As yet he knew scarcely a soul in London, his work as a scholar and translator was still utterly unregarded, and he had not even finished the great undertaking on which he had entered more than ten years before. None of his friends, and least of all Cary himself, could have foretold in 1808, or indeed half a dozen years later, that before his fiftieth year he would find himself successful, famous, and if by no means wealthy, at least relieved of most of his pecuniary anxieties.

The move to London did not at first seem a fortunate step. Almost at once Cary's health relapsed, and for two years continuous study or other work was out of the question. Thanks mainly to the unceasing devotion of his wife, he pulled through at last, and in the spring of 1810 we find him more or less fit for work. Despite generous assistance from his father, the support of his large family was a matter of some anxiety, and as soon as possible Cary sought Church employment in London. For some years he held the readership at the Berkeley Chapel; from 1814 we shall find him a curate at Chiswick; and for a time he served the curacy of the historic Savoy Chapel Royal in the Strand.

We know little or nothing of his movements during 1808

and 1809 ; he seems to have passed a nomadic existence at various lodgings. In 1810, however, he rented a house near the Edgware Road, in what was then a pleasant suburban district : " the house is very retired, and looks to the fields," Cary tells his father, " and yet is near enough to the best part of the town." Here at last the family was reunited (Cary's half-sisters having, it seems, for some time taken charge of two or three of the younger children), and the furniture having been brought up from Kingsbury, the transplantation to London was complete.

It was not, however, till the summer of 1811 that Cary was able to resume his reading ; at any rate, his Journal begins again in June of that year, and continues without serious break to the end of 1815. But he had probably been able to recommence work on the Dante a year or so before ; there is no record of progress with the *Paradiso*, which he had begun to translate some time after 1807, but by 1811 he must have been nearing the end of his long task. The news is set down quite simply in the Journal entry of May 8, 1812 : " Finished my translation of Dante's Commedia—began the 16th of January, 1797." [1] Without delay Cary set to work at elaborating the notes and other explanatory matter, which, as Price had observed, were far from complete, even as concerned the *Inferno* alone, in the volumes of 1805-6. This occupied another eighteen months, during which Cary records a number of visits to the British Museum, where he now made use of the library for the first time.

Before dealing with the publication of the completed translation, we may notice briefly some other literary activities to which allusion is also made in the Journal for

[1] The *Memoir* prints here *June* for *January*, by a mistake : the original entries (i, p. 103) prove that the latter is correct.

these years. Cary's general reading, wide and deep as ever in the classics, Italian, French and English, now extended also to Spanish, which he must have acquired casually during one of his periods of convalescence. On September 16, 1812, he reads one of Calderon's comedies, and later we find him working through the great Spanish epic, the *Araucana* of Ercilla, with his young daughter Jane Sophia, who was now of an age to share to some extent in his studies. Cary took a great deal of pleasure in directing her education. French, Italian, and Spanish he taught her himself; and he provided masters for music and painting. Latin and Greek were not then thought necessary for young ladies, and Cary was not above the prejudice of the age in this respect; nor, I am afraid, was he quite enlightened on the subject of another accomplishment common enough even then, in London at least: "dancing" says his son, "was the only accomplishment that he could not away with."

About this time, partly for the amusement of his daughter, Cary turned into English verse an amusing little tale from the Italian fabulist Pignotti—"Il Vecchio e L'Asino." This, which is printed in the *Memoir*, is one of Cary's happiest efforts in lighter verse translation, his talent for which also comes out well in parts of the *Early French Poets*. A more ambitious enterprise, begun in 1814 but very soon abandoned, was a translation, in flowing couplets, of the *Argonautica* of Valerius Flaccus, the "purity and gravity" of whose style Cary greatly admired, though he did not subscribe to the common opinion of his superiority to the earlier poet of the Golden Fleece, Apollonius of Rhodes. Only two or three hundred lines, which afterwards appeared in the *London Magazine*, were finished, Cary's taste inclining him to prefer translation from Greek rather than Latin.

The most interesting of these minor compositions is one

of which unfortunately we know very little. This was an original poem on a theme suggested by a passage in Dante. The Journal for July 2, 1813, contains the brief entry : " Finished writing the Visions of Roméo." There can be no doubt that Cary's Roméo was the wise counsellor of Dante's *Paradiso*, canto vi. Unluckily Cary's poem was never printed and cannot now be found. His son tells us that " in after life, when he had some thoughts of publishing a volume of original poems, my father selected this as the one that should stand first in the collection." Henry Cary intended to bring this out at the same time as the *Memoir* and the reprints of Cary's prose works, but for some reason the volume of verses never appeared and the manuscripts have vanished.

Though the *Visions of Roméo* was not a long poem, it was probably one of Cary's most successful efforts, and it is a pity that we have only slight hints of what it was like. Dante's Roméo, " persona umile e peregrina," is apparently the historical chancellor of Raymond Berengar IV who ruled Provence in the first half of the thirteenth century. The romantic legend alluded to, with characteristic brevity, by Dante, is told more fully by the Florentine chronicler Villani. Roméo is said to have come as a pilgrim to Raymond's court, where his wisdom and courage gained him the office of " master and steward." Having successfully arranged the marriages of Raymond's four daughters, one of them to the King of England, he took offence at some envious rumours circulated by the barons of Provence and determined to depart as he had come :

The worthy Roméo said, " Count, I have served thee long while, and raised thy estate from small to great, and for this, through the false counsel of thy people, thou art

little grateful ; I came to thy court a poor pilgrim, and I have lived virtuously here ; give me back my mule, my staff, and my scrip, as I came here, and I renounce thy service." The Count would not that he should depart ; but, for nought that he could do would he remain ; and as he came, so he departed, and no one knew whence he came or whither he went. But many held that he was a sainted soul.[1]

The plan of Cary's *Visions* probably resembled that of his favourite Gray's ode, *The Bard*, and included prophecies by Roméo of the future history of Europe. Events in England and, it appears from an inquiry addressed to Price in December, 1813, in Wales also, were given some prominence. The loss of this poem is the more to be regretted that it seems to have been Cary's only original composition directly inspired by the work of Dante.

The main occupation of this year, 1813, was the printing of the Dante. In October Cary writes to Price :

My time is at present fully occupied in printing my translation, and in transcribing and amending my notes for it. The whole of the first volume and the greater part of the second is printed. I wish I could have your revisal of the whole before it went to press. But the thing had been so long hanging on my mind, that I found it necessary to make an effort to get rid of it : and I have taken so much pains to compare mine with other versions, as, I think, to have escaped any gross error.

The three volumes containing the complete translation were published on New Year's Day, 1814, in circumstances

[1] *Villani's Chronicle*, translated and edited by Selfe and Wicksteed (1906), p. 196-7. "Romeo" was a common term in Tuscan for a pilgrim who had been to Rome ; and this probably was how the legend arose.

unfortunately even less favourable to their success than those in which the *Inferno* had appeared. Undoubtedly Cary's intention had been to publish the complete work, like the first instalment, with the Italian text printed opposite his translation; but so small had been the sale of the earlier volumes that in 1813 he could find no publisher willing to issue his book on any terms. Undaunted, Cary determined to publish at his own expense; this however obliged him to be satisfied with the most economical format possible. And so the work finally appeared not only minus the Italian text and the "Life of Dante," but, as the author described it in a later and more splendid edition, "printed in so small a character as to deter a numerous class of readers from perusing it." So minute was the type that Cary's only favourable reviewer probably did him as much harm as good by closing a friendly notice with these witticisms:

Those of our readers who value their eyes more than their purse, will scarcely thank Mr. Cary for the microscopical typography with which he has been pleased to afflict them; and it is a melancholy fact that we, aged and conscientious reviewers, who have painfully explored his volumes by the help of our spectacles and midnight oil, never fancied ourselves completely emancipated from *Hell* and *Purgatory* till *Paradise* closed on our sight.[1]

The only compensating advantage was convenience in

[1] *Monthly Review*, March, 1815, p. 322. The volumes were 16mo, with a page about 4 by 3 inches; the price was 12s. for the three volumes in boards. The title was now: *The Vision; or Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise, of Dante Alighieri. Translated by The Rev. H. F. Cary, A.M. . . . London*, 1814. Cary used the title "Vision" because, as he notes in the preface, he thought it "more conformable to the genius of our language" than "The Divine Comedy"; and it has the authority of one or two fairly early editions. The "Life of Dante" was replaced by a brief table or "Chronological View of the Age of Dante."

carriage, which one well-known reader at least appreciated. Keats, as everyone will remember, made this edition of Cary's Dante his sole library during his walking-tour in Scotland in the summer of 1818 : "they will go into the aptest corner," he wrote.

In his new preface Cary expresses the hope that "the poem, even in the present version of it, may not be without interest for the mere English reader." Alluding to the many years spent on the work, he remarks, with an interesting anticipation of later relations with Coleridge :

On a retrospect of the time and exertions, that have been thus employed, I do not regard those hours as the least happy of my life, during which (to use the eloquent language of Mr. Coleridge) "my individual recollections have been suspended, and lulled to sleep amid the music of nobler thoughts" ; nor that study as misapplied, which has familiarised me with one of the sublimest efforts of the human invention.

The reception of the 1814 Dante in most respects merely repeats that of the earlier enterprise. As before, friends were mostly cordial, critics and the public in general apathetic. As late as November 11, 1814, Cary tells Price :

I have seen no review of the translation of Dante, except two or three lines of very contemptuous mention made of it in the "Critical Review." [1] For this gnat-sting I got a basilicon plaster the same day in a letter from Mr. Crowe,

[1] Fourth Series, vol. v, p. 647 : "The subject [of Dante's poem] is sublime—not so the prevailing language of this translator." The review had changed hands since 1807, which accounts for the inconsistency with what Price had said before ; he wrote an article on this occasion, but it was refused by the new proprietors and does not seem to have been printed (cf. *Memoir*, ii, p. 40).

the public orator [of Oxford], couched in such a strain of compliment as my modesty will not let me repeat.

Walter Birch thought as highly of the work as the author of *Lewesdon Hill*, and sent some verses, which do not seem to have survived. But such tributes could do little for the general circulation, and since the greater reviews, the *Edinburgh* and the *Quarterly*, had nothing to say, Cary's book was ignored.

Nevertheless things were not quite so bad as this melancholy account suggests. While it is true that interest in Dante was still lagging in the rear of Italian studies in this country, it would be a mistake to assume from the failure of Cary's second venture that no progress was being made. In fact, it is from just about this time that the decided growth of a truer appreciation of the earlier Italian writers may be traced. The peace after Waterloo brought greatly increased facilities for intercourse, social and literary, between Italy and England; the historical and critical work of earlier and almost isolated scholars like Thomas Warton and William Roscoe was beginning to bear fruit; and it was now reinforced by the criticism of younger men like Coleridge, Leigh Hunt, and the great Italian poet and critic, Ugo Foscolo, who came to England in 1816. Among the most important achievements of the new criticism were the development of the comparative study of literature (for which Coleridge did so much), and the insistence on an unprejudiced reading of such early poets as Chaucer and Dante, Spenser and Petrarch. With the correction of the extravagant estimation in which Filicaia and Guidi and Metastasio had been held, there came at last a genuine understanding of Dante, who for a century had been so strangely misinterpreted or neglected in England and even

in his own country. The popularity of such a translation as Cary's came as a natural result of these tendencies ; and the curious and striking contrast between its utter failure in 1814 and its sudden rise to fame five years later is easily explained, as we shall see, by reference to the principles of the noble art of self-advertisement. As publicity agent for his own works Cary, it must be granted, was a hopeless failure ; he had not even the sense to imitate his rival Henry Boyd by dedicating his work to a "Right Honourable." If an excess of modesty is a fault, we may justly say that Cary had only himself to blame for the postponement of his success.

A more immediate anxiety than the absence of literary fame was the state of his purse. The extent of Cary's poverty, both at this time and later, has sometimes been exaggerated ; but it is true that, while never actually in want, during most of his life he was in a condition of uncertainty about the future, and of straitened resources for meeting immediate needs. About 1814, his son tells us, his annual income was rather less than £500, of which barely one-fifth came from his livings at Abbots Bromley and Kingsbury ; so that if Cary was a pluralist, he was a very mild one indeed. The remainder was made up from his work in London and an allowance of £200 from his father. On this income he had to maintain a large and still growing family of young children, of whom the eldest, William Lucius, was just entering the army, while James and Henry were now at the Merchant Taylors' School. No wonder the translation of Dante had to appear in microscopic type. Even when the Dante at last began to pay for itself, and when Cary was earning considerable sums by journalism, his income was only just sufficient to meet his expenses ; and as late as 1823, when two sons

were at Oxford and two others at school, it was no more than £800, every penny of which was spent before the close of the year.[1]

It was natural, therefore, that in 1814, his health being restored for the time at least, Cary should wish to find some fixed employment congenial both in itself and in the place of residence it would require. A curacy was still the only opening likely to offer itself, and so he took advantage of an opportunity to exchange his post at the fashionable Berkeley Chapel for quieter and pleasanter duties at Chiswick, then a peaceful and picturesque riverside parish little larger than a village, but near enough to London to enable him to keep an eye on his sons at school. To Chiswick, therefore, he took his family in the summer, having bought a house concerning which he wrote to Price (April 24, 1814) :

My new dwelling will be only divided from the Thames by the breadth of the public road, and will command a grand view of that river, of which I am not so worthy as you. If you are not engaged by the new curacy on which you are likely to batten, I hope you will soon come to me, and teach me again how to feather the oar.

Cary's Chiswick residence, a quaint, comfortable villa, remained in his possession for twenty years, though he did not live there after 1826. It dates from the Queen Anne period, and is still standing, little changed in itself, though the surrounding district has altered out of recognition even since Cary's day. It is a place of many associations. In the mid-eighteenth century it belonged to Sir James Thornhill, the painter, whose daughter Jane ran off from here to Paddington Church to be secretly married, in 1729, to an

[1] An account-book covering 1817-25 (Cary MSS.) shows an income in 1817 of £663 ; from 1819-1823 inclusive it was about £800 ; and in 1824 and 1825 about £950.

obscure young painter and engraver, William Hogarth. Later, after the reconciliation with his father-in-law, Hogarth himself took over the house and made it his summer villa. In Cary's day many vestiges of his residence remained, and were duly pointed out to friends of the *London Magazine* circle on their frequent visits. Lamb must have been particularly interested in the house, for he idolised Hogarth, and held his collection of the famous engravings—*The Rake's Progress*, *Marriage-à-la-Mode*, and the rest—among his most cherished possessions. In 1902 the house was purchased and restored as a memorial to this most English of painters ; and to this day we may see the panelled rooms very much as they were two hundred years ago, trace the site of Hogarth's garden studio, inspect the famous mulberry tree under which the children of the neighbourhood were often feasted, and grow sentimental, if we wish, over the grave of a pet bullfinch in a corner of the grounds.

After settling at Chiswick Cary passed a happy and uneventful year divided between church duties, study, and the care of his daughter Jane's education. She was now (1815) in her seventeenth year, and as she was being taught almost entirely at home it was natural that most of his affections at this time should centre in her. Both in disposition and in attainments she promised to repay fully all her father's tenderness. But by another cruel stroke of fate she was taken from him just at the moment when it seemed his troubles were over. Towards the autumn of this year a severe cough proved to be the symptom of an affection of the lungs. Cary's alarm was extreme : "May you never know such anxiety !" he wrote to Price in January, 1816, "or rather, as you can scarcely expect to live without being exposed to it, may you have a little more firmness of mind to encounter it !" Arrangements were

set on foot at once for Cary to take his daughter by sea to Italy or the south of France ; but before he could even secure places on a suitable vessel it became all too clear that such measures were useless, and the projected voyage came to nothing. The galloping consumption ran its course, and by the middle of April the poor girl was dead. Cary was almost stupefied ; but his wife's grief was courageously restrained by her fears for his reason. " The morning after my sister's death," writes Henry Cary, who was a boy of twelve at the time, " was the first on which I became acquainted with sorrow " :

My father sat all day long in what appeared to me a state of awful silence, neither showing nor seeking sympathy. But what most impressed me at the time was the bearing of my mother ; she manifested none of the usual tokens of grief, offered no word or sign of comfort to her fellow-sufferer, but sat watching him with more than a mother's anxiety for a helpless dying infant. . . . She must have been longing to see an outburst of grief, yet not daring to provoke it. It was doubtless owing to her self-devotion, to the concealment of her own sufferings, in order that he might not feel the full extent of his, that is to be attributed his escape from that awful visitation which had attended the loss of his youngest daughter in 1807.

Probably this explanation of Cary's almost surprising immunity on this occasion is correct ; or there may be something in what he wrote to Price in the following July, alluding to the deaths of his two daughters : " I sometimes think that that blow [Harriet's death] so effectually stunned me as to make me much less sensible to the last, though in fact a much severer one." At any rate, though he remained plunged in grief throughout this year, by the autumn he was able at least to think of his loss calmly. As early as

May, when he was at Ramsgate with his family, trying the effect of a change of scene, he was struggling hard to fight down despair. Though he writes in one of his curiously striking phrases : " Our loss will never be repaired on this side the grave," the same letter contains the first hint of a new translating project, which just now but faintly interested him ; but ultimately it was to be carried through, after an even greater interval of time than the Dante had covered : " I have brought nothing here for my amusement but Heyne's Pindar, in which, however, if I can once interest myself about it, I shall meet with enough to suspend more melancholy thoughts now and then." A sonnet of some merit, written in August, expresses in an affecting fashion Cary's feelings at this time, and is worth reproducing here if only for its personal interest :

Thrice has the dart of Death my peace bereaved ;
First, gentle mother, when it laid thee low,
Then was my morn of life o'ercast with woe,
And oft through youth the lonely sigh was heaved.
But in a child I thought thou wert retrieved ;
She loved me well, nor from my side would go
Through fields by summer scorch'd or wintry snow :
How o'er that little bier at noon I grieved !
Last when as time has touch'd my locks with white,
Another now had learnt to shed fresh balm
Into the wounds, and with a daughter's name
Was as a seraph near me, to delight
Restoring me by wisdom's holy calm.
O Death ! I pray thee next a kinder aim.

In the autumn Cary was able to return to London and undertake duties at the Savoy Chapel, his Chiswick curacy and the house there having been given up to a substitute for three years when he was expecting to take his daughter

abroad. A house was rented in Cecil Street, Strand, and here the winter passed without incident. 1817, however, was to be a momentous year for Cary. In the spring the illness of his youngest boy, Francis Stephen (born in 1808, and afterwards a painter), sent the family to the seaside again. Their choice this time was the south coast, and after a month in Worthing they took a house in the small village of Littlehampton. Here, it is plain, Cary's spirits at last began to revive, and his letters from Sussex to his sister and her husband and to Walter Birch show more animation. To the former he sends a long account of his visit to the Roman villa at Bignor and to Amberley Castle, and to the latter he gives a list of his studies during the winter at Littlehampton ; though he protests that it shows no great diligence, it scarcely suggests idleness to a modern reader. Besides going through the whole of the *Iliad* and half the *Odyssey* with his son Henry, he read for himself all the *Canterbury Tales* and the *magnum opus* of Bishop Stillingfleet, *Origines Sacrae, or a Rational Account of the Christian Faith.* Numerous "lighter troops," as he calls them, included the Jesuit Strada's *Prolusiones* and a dialogue on education by Sadoletti, a humanist of the Italian Renaissance, out of which Cary afterwards made a pleasant little article for the *London Magazine.*

Nor was he confined entirely to his books and his family for company at Littlehampton. At Felpham, only five miles away, two former acquaintances, whom we have already met, were now living in seclusion. The great Dr. Cyril Jackson, having refused several bishoprics to remain Dean of Christ Church, had at length retired to Sussex in 1809 to end his days in privacy and quiet ; and the amiable if not quite so impressive and orthodox Hayley was spending his last years in solitude and ill-health at his "marine

hermitage." Whether Cary met the Doctor at this period we do not know ; but he certainly went over to the poet's house once or twice early in 1818, to chat about Italian and Spanish literature and to be entertained with the story of Hayley's two marriages (both unsuccessful) and with an account of his rather distant relations with Jackson. Partly on political grounds (for Hayley, of course, was a Whig), and partly because the poet had had some disagreements with his first wife, the Doctor did not altogether approve of his neighbour ; and Cary tells a good story in his life of the poet :

When Hayley waited on him, the Doctor declined entering upon an interchange of visits ; but said that he should be happy to establish an intercourse of a different kind, and to send him occasionally books, or anything else which he might happen to have, and which Hayley might be without, and to receive from him the same neighbourly accommodations in return. Accordingly when the poet took a wife in his old age, he sent the Doctor a piece of the wedding cake, with a message, that he hoped at some future time to receive a neighbourly communication of the same sort in return.

Hayley was sixty-four at his second marriage, Jackson a year younger.

But a much more interesting meeting had already occurred at Littlehampton itself. In the autumn of 1817 began the friendship with Samuel Taylor Coleridge, " poet, metaphysician, bard," which lasted until the death of the latter in 1834. It is characteristic of Cary's almost absurd modesty that though he had long recognised and admired the genius of Coleridge, and though he knew of the great man's presence in Littlehampton, he made no attempt to scrape acquaintance, and the initiative came entirely from the other side.

In the spring of the previous year Coleridge, in a final

and partly successful effort to throw off his slavery to the opium habit, had placed himself under the care of Dr. Gillman at Highgate, which was to remain his headquarters for the rest of his life. During these later years Coleridge did not often leave London, but one of the earliest of his few excursions took him to Littlehampton, whither he was accompanied by Mrs. Gillman in August or September, 1817. The meeting with Cary is best described in the words of the latter's son :

Several hours of each day were spent by Mr. Cary in reading the Classics with the author of this memoir, who was then only thirteen years of age. After a morning of toil over Greek and Latin composition it was our custom to walk on the sands and read Homer aloud, a practice adopted partly for the sake of the sea-breezes, and not a little, I believe, in order that the pupil might learn to read *ore rotundo*, having to raise his voice above the noise of the sea that was breaking at our feet. For several consecutive days Coleridge crossed us in our walk. The sound of the Greek, and especially the expressive countenance of the tutor, attracted his notice ; so one day, as we met, he placed himself directly in my father's way and thus accosted him : " Sir, yours is a face I *should* know : I am Samuel Taylor Coleridge." His person was not unknown to my father, who had already pointed him out to me as the greatest genius of our age and country.

Our volume of Homer was shut up ; but as it was ever Coleridge's custom to speak, it could not be called talking or conversing, on the subject that first offered itself, whatever it might be ; the deep mysteries of the blind bard engaged our attention during the remainder of a long walk. . . .

The close of our walk found Coleridge at our family dinner table. Amongst other topics of conversation Dante's " divine " poem was mentioned : Coleridge had never heard of my father's translation, but took a copy home with him

that night. On the following day when the two friends (for so they may from the first day of their meeting be called) met for the purpose of taking their daily stroll, Coleridge was able to recite whole pages of the version of Dante, and though he had not the original with him, repeated passages of that also, and commented on the translation. Before leaving Littlehampton he expressed his determination to bring the version of Dante into public notice.

Coleridge's promises were very apt to be like pie-crusts, made to be broken ; but wonderfully enough this one held firm. Not only did he afford Cary the encouragement of his enthusiastic and continued admiration, but, as we shall see, within a very short time he gave active assistance in promoting the sale of the Dante.

The first meeting between the two men occurred probably some time in October, and within a few days Cary was called away to London for a month or so on some business matter. To this chance separation we owe two very interesting letters which Coleridge, remaining in Littlehampton, wrote to his new friend, giving his considered opinion of the translation. To the criticisms in these we shall have occasion to recur later ; here it will suffice to notice the more personal parts. In the first (October 29, 1817), after enthusiastic praise of the " Dantesque " effect of Cary's blank verse, Coleridge makes some remarks which suggest that their acquaintance was still quite recent :

I would that my literary influence were enough to secure the knowledge of the work for the true lovers of poetry in general. But how came it that you had it published in so *too* unostentatious a form ? For a second or third edition, the form has its conveniences ; but for the first, in the present state of English society, *quod non arrogas tibi, non habes.*

The allusion, of course, is to the tiny volumes of 1814. Cary's reply, like all his letters to Coleridge, is unfortunately missing; but we can guess its tenor from the poet's second letter (November 6, 1817):

> What I expressed concerning your translation, I did not say lightly or without examination: and I know enough of myself to be confident that any feeling of personal partiality would rather lead me to doubts and dissatisfactions respecting a particular work in proportion as it might possibly occasion me to overrate the man.

And he goes on to illustrate this from his treatment of Wordsworth's faults as a poet, in the *Biographia Literaria*, and to reaffirm, after a second reading, his high opinion of the translation: "I find no other alteration in my judgment but an additional confidence in it." After a further discussion of the questions of metre and diction, he ends with a tactful offer to place copies of the work with Murray and other prominent booksellers, a request to be allowed to see any of Cary's original writings still in manuscript, and a cordial invitation from himself and the Gillmans to pay a visit to Highgate.

Cary for his part was not less pleased with his new friendship. Writing to Birch in the following spring (April 8, 1818), and giving his favourable impressions of Coleridge's most recent publications, *Zapolya*, *Sibylline Leaves* ("almost filled with genuine poetry"), and the *Biographia Literaria*, he adds:

> With the author himself I had the pleasure of becoming intimate here last autumn, and find him on the whole the most extraordinary man I have met with, insomuch that I expect it will be some time or other considered among the *opprobria* of this age that he is suffered to continue in

poverty, and with regard to any public acknowledgement of his merits, almost in neglect.

Cary was as yet, of course, in ignorance of his friend's unhappy opium habits ; though he did not long remain so.

By this time Coleridge's unwonted energy had already found an opportunity of exerting itself to practical effect. In January he had begun to deliver the last of his courses of lectures on European Literature, in a room in Flower de Luce Court, near the Temple. This proved on the whole the most successful, and certainly the most profitable series of lectures he had given in London. Contrary to his previous practice, he used carefully prepared notes, but according to Gillman it was obvious that "his audience were more delighted when, putting his notes aside, he spoke extempore." It seems to have been in one of these flashes of eloquence, when the true Coleridge—now all too rarely—asserted himself, and entranced his hearers with an inspired yet clear and ordered discourse, that Cary's Dante was praised in some remarks which proved strikingly effective. Unluckily no complete record exists of the tenth lecture, delivered February 27, 1818, on Donne, Dante, and Milton. The imperfect notes published by H. N. Coleridge in the *Literary Remains* tell us merely that a number of passages were read from the *Commedia*, followed by Cary's English version, and that after one of these quotations Coleridge noted : "Here to speak of Mr. Cary's translation." We have to guess the nature of his remarks as best we can. A hint, at least, is given by Henry Crabb Robinson, the diarist, who attended nearly the whole course.[1] Robinson was not an undiscriminating admirer of Coleridge as a lecturer,

[1] The passages in the diary referring to these lectures are printed accurately in Miss E. J. Morley's volume of selections, *Blake, Coleridge, Wordsworth, Lamb, etc.* (1922), pp. 143-5.

and, as he often laments in his diary, it took a good deal to keep him awake after dinner ; but on this occasion he thought the poet's address "one of his very best," and adds that he "digressed less than usual and really gave information and ideas about the poets he professed to criticise."

One would like to think that Cary himself was present on this memorable evening ; and though we cannot be sure, some ground for the supposition is afforded by a series of entries in his account-book recording payment for "Mr. Coleridge's lectures," and presumably referring to this series, though we do not know whether Cary went on February 27.[1]

The effect of Coleridge's praise, if we are to believe Cary's son, was immediate and startling. "The work," he states, "was at once eagerly sought after. About a thousand copies of the first edition, that remained on hand, were immediately disposed of ; in less than three months a new edition was called for." Henry Cary's account is written *currente calamo*, and is not quite free from errors ; but substantially it is right in giving Coleridge the chief credit for Cary's popularity. A different and in some respects contradictory version, however, was given currency many years later by another of Cary's friends, Samuel Rogers. In a conversation with Alexander Dyce Rogers denied that Coleridge's lecture had the effect stated in the *Memoir :* "I was present at that lecture," he said ; "there were about a hundred and twenty persons in the room. But I doubt if that did much towards making it known." He gives most of the credit to an article in the *Edinburgh Review*, written by the Italian poet, Ugo Foscolo, with some assistance from Sir James Mackintosh and Rogers himself ; but this,

[1] The payments, however, are noted nearly a year later : £5 on Dec. 6, 1818, 10s. on Jan. 24, 1819, and several similar sums later, the last in March, 1819. Coleridge did not lecture after March, 1818, so that the entries must, I think, refer to this course.

according to Henry Cary, merely "re-echoed" Coleridge's praises. Rogers has this much in favour of his view, that the article, which appeared in the February number, could not have been *immediately* inspired by Coleridge's remarks, since it must have been already written, if not actually in print, at the date of the lecture. But in other respects Rogers's account betrays both prejudice and imperfect recollection, and is to be received with caution. Though his attitude to Cary was always that of a friend and indeed of a benefactor, there was some estrangement between them in later years; and Rogers, a little jealous of Coleridge's fame, was too anxious to claim credit for himself and the friends who were concerned in the *Edinburgh* article. What he says of Coleridge's first acquaintance with the translation is certainly wrong: "Moore mentioned the work to me with great admiration; I mentioned it to Wordsworth; and he to Coleridge, who had never heard of it till then, and who forthwith read it." Coleridge's letters to Cary are a sufficient refutation of this, and it is unsupported by any contemporary evidence.[1] Moore, indeed, was so moderate an Italian scholar that the debt is much more likely to have been the other way. It is quite probable that Rogers's muddled recollection really reflects some of Coleridge's conversational propaganda on Cary's behalf during the winter of 1817-18, and that Moore, Wordsworth, and Rogers himself all owed their knowledge of Cary's

[1] Moreover, Cary's own view is stated clearly in the preface (July, 1819) to the new edition: "Amongst the few into whose hands it fell, about two years ago, Mr. Coleridge became one; and I have both a pride and a pleasure in acknowledging, that it has been owing chiefly to the prompt and strenuous exertions of that gentleman in recommending the book to public notice that the opportunity has been afforded me of sending it forth in its present form." It is noticeable that Moore's voluminous journals contain no reference to Cary's Dante earlier than 1835.

Dante to its first discoverer. It is not, perhaps, a very important matter; but if this theory is correct it explains the origin of the *Edinburgh* article in the most intelligible way, as "re-echoing" not Coleridge's public lecture but one of his earlier private ones.

Yet we must not underrate the importance of this article in promoting the sale of Cary's book. The Whig periodical was one of the most powerful, for good and evil, then appearing, as Wordsworth and many others who met with very different treatment found to their cost. Work praised in the *Edinbugh* was almost sure to sell; and the authors of this article left their readers in no doubt concerning their opinion:

> Of all the translators of Dante with whom we are acquainted, Mr. Cary is the most successful; and we cannot but consider his work as a great acquisition to the English reader. It is executed with a fidelity almost without example; and though the measure he has adopted conveys no idea of the original stanza, it is perhaps the best for his purpose, and what Dante himself would have chosen, if he had written in English and in a later day. . . . Throughout he [Cary] discovers the will and the power to do justice to his author. He has omitted nothing, he has added nothing; and though here and there his inversions are ungraceful, and his phrases a little obsolete, he walks not unfrequently by the side of his master, and sometimes perhaps goes beyond him.

The smaller fry among the periodicals lost no time in following the lead of the *Edinburgh Review*. During the next year or two articles on Dante containing eulogistic references to Cary are very numerous. Thus the *Scots Magazine*, in September, 1818, began a series of papers on the *Commedia* consisting mainly of extensive quotations from

"Mr. Cary's faithful transcript"; and the *Eclectic Review*, in June of the following year, declared that Cary's was "perhaps the best translation of any poet in the whole compass of English literature." It would be tedious to multiply examples, and much of the praise was, of course, as cheap and uncritical as the unmerited neglect to which it succeeded; but it served its turn in advertising Cary's work, and there was some demand for the new edition even before it was ready.

Coleridge filled up the sum of his services by helping Cary to find publishers for a reissue of the Dante in a worthier form. In May, 1818, Cary was again in London, and he writes to Price on the 10th: "The booksellers already propose another edition, and we are to talk over the terms to-morrow at Coleridge's, with whom I am to spend the day at Highgate. But they are such hard men to deal with, I scarcely expect much to come of it." However, at Highgate next day Cary was agreeably surprised at the liberality of Messrs. Taylor and Hessey, the publishers to whom Coleridge had already made overtures on his behalf. There and then an agreement was signed by which they were to purchase the remainder of the old edition (about a thousand copies) for £109, and to pay £125 for the new edition of 750 copies.[1]

The affable and enterprising John Taylor (himself a writer in a small way) and his amiable but rather colourless partner, James Augustus Hessey, whom Keats nicknamed "Mistessey," have their niche in literary history in virtue of their friendships as well as their wide and important publishing connections. Keats, Lamb, Hazlitt, and Clare,

[1] These 1,750 copies were all sold by about eighteen months after the 1819 edition appeared, and in 1820 Cary received a further sum of forty guineas for the sale of an additional 250 copies.

the "Peasant Poet," are among the best-known of the writers for whom they published; and with Cary, as with Lamb and Hazlitt, their relations were greatly extended by their proprietorship of the *London Magazine*, to which all three contributed. With this we shall deal in the next chapter; but it is worth while to notice here the cordiality of their early relations with Cary, because we shall find that some of their later enterprises were not quite so well managed, and it is therefore only just to mention that during the earlier years of their partnership they had a high reputation for business talent and fair dealing. Coleridge, in a letter to Cary (which the latter quotes to Price in January, 1819), reports Alexander Chalmers as saying of them: "These are men that give respect as well as receive it," and adds that "they are very honest and honourable men."

Cary, too, was more than satisfied with the terms they had offered for the Dante; and though the printing of the new edition was carried on in a rather leisurely fashion, this was partly compensated by the keen interest which Taylor, the leading partner, took in even the smallest points in the revision of the text. At last, in July, 1819, the second complete edition, in three handsome octavos published at 36s., was ready. The "Life of Dante" was restored, expanded to almost double its former length; the notes, also greatly extended, were put in the most convenient place, at the foot of the page; an index was provided; and best of all, the type was at least twice as large as that of 1814. In fact, typographically as well as in other more important but less obvious respects, Cary's Dante had now no reason to fear comparison with its already half-forgotten rival, Boyd's.

Here, perhaps, may be suitably noticed, as a sign of Coleridge's continued interest in the translation, the manuscript annotations which he made in a copy of this new

edition.[1] They are careful and sometimes subtle criticisms, mainly on points of detail. In two or three places Cary's version is adversely criticised; but the prevailing sentiment is a discriminating admiration. After questioning the interpretation of some lines in the *Paradiso*, canto i, Coleridge adds: "But those only who see the difficulty of the original can do justice to Mr. Cary's Translation—which may now and then not be Dante's *Words*, but always, always, *Dante*." On the next page, in commending the handling of a difficult astronomical passage, he sums up Cary's qualities as a translator with the remark: "Admirably translated. O how few will appreciate its value! Genius is not alone sufficient—it must be present, indeed, in the Translator, in order to supply a *negative* Test by its sympathy; to *feel* that it *has* been well done. But it is *Taste*, *Scholarship*, *Discipline*, TACT, that must do it."

Among the private congratulations which Cary received on the appearance of this edition one only seems to call for notice. From his old acquaintance Hayley, one of the few remaining links with Cary's youth and its quaint enthusiasms, there came a pleasant and characteristically flowery letter:

[Chichester] October 5, 1819.

My Dear Admirable Dante Redivivus!

My best thanks have been long due to you for a delightful Present—the new Edition of the divine old Bard, whom you have naturalized most happily, having arranged Him in an English Garb of great elegance and dignity . . . [After a severe illness] by the mercy of Heaven, I am so far revived, that I can again enjoy a social and literary intercourse with my Friends; and even dabble again in Rhimes—but as I

[1] These were first printed by Dykes Campbell in the *Athenæum*, January, 1888, p. 17. They are also given in *Dante in English Literature*, i, p. 627 sq. The book is now in the British Museum.

suspect that my Rhimes, like the Homilies of Gil Blas' Archbishop, may savour of apoplexy I think it right to keep them in utter privacy—otherwise I should be eager to celebrate your Felicity in having converted the old Italian Bard into an English Classick—your Book is a glorious acquisition to the Literature of our Country, and will, I hope, produce to you all the Honour and emolument that it so richly deserves.

Having accomplished your arduous Enterprize so happily, I wish you may be tempted to devote your Pen to some grand original Project of your own Imagination, for the Honour of our Country—at my age it is Time to exclaim "claudite jam rivos"—but you are in the Prime of Life, and in the full vigour of rare poetical Power, to which I heartily wish long, honorable, and most felicitous Exertion, being most truly

my dear Brother of Parnassus,
Your sincere old Friend
and admirer,
W. Hayley.

Hayley died only a year later. Like Miss Seward he was inclined to expect a little too much for his friends; but his wishes for the Dante, at any rate, were fulfilled. We may round off the story of Cary's rise to fame with an amusing incident which occurred some years later. Our authority is a letter from Cary to Price in November, 1825:

Henry [his son] went yesterday to lay out part of his fee in a bookseller's shop in Piccadilly, and I must indulge a translator's vanity so far as to relate what there befell him. "I have some old College books that I should like to exchange," said Henry. "They would be of no use to me," said the man, "but if you have any standard works I should like to take them." "What do you mean by standard works?" says H., when the man beginning "Cary's

Dante, Sir ! " he burst into one of his laughs, at which the man was so confused that H. found it necessary to explain the cause of his mirth.

Very different, then, were Cary's prospects on terminating, in November, 1818, his eighteen months' residence at Littlehampton. He had left London neglected and unknown, and sunk in grief at the death of his daughter ; when he returned his name was already familiar to most readers, his spirits were more cheerful, and a new and more prosperous chapter in his life was opening.

At Littlehampton had been born, in November, 1817, the last of his children, Richard, the sixth son. As not infrequently happens, the child of Cary's later life seemed to promise in many ways more remarkably than any of his other sons, intelligent as all of them were. Richard, as he grew up, proved a slow student at Classics, but his interest in English literature, particularly the drama, was so intense and lively that had he lived he might have produced something of value in this field of study. He died, however, only a few months after his father, at the age of twenty-seven.

On returning to his duties at the Savoy Chapel Cary, having to find a temporary residence for five or six months before he could regain possession of his Chiswick home, rented a house at Kentish Town, which he chose in order to be within easy reach of his new friends, Coleridge and the Gillmans, at Highgate. During the winter there were many meetings of which no record now remains ; but we can judge of the fascination which the company of this " archangel a little damaged " held for the quiet and sensitive scholar by the regret which he expressed on leaving the immediate neighbourhood. This, the last of many changes

of residence (he wrote to Birch from Chiswick in April, 1819),

has been somewhat against my own inclination ; but if I had not made it, I should have had two bargains to drive, one as landlord (the house I now live in being my own), and another as tenant, in both of which I should probably have come off, as I do in almost all bargains, second best. . . . One cause of regret to me at this change of residence is the distance to which it removes me from him [Coleridge]. Mr. Hazlitt has very well described the peculiar charm of his conversation, though he is, I think, very unjust to him as an author. Not to speak of his poems, with which you know how much I have been always delighted, some parts of his prose writings appear to me to be almost the only compositions of the kind in later days that call one back to a happier age, I mean that of Elizabeth and her two successors. It is indeed a very striking contrast between his style and that of Mr. Hazlitt, which is cut and minced, and sparkles like the French, or Seneca's, and which you have well termed " flippant and ambitious."

No doubt Cary had in mind the well-known passage at the end of Hazlitt's *Lectures on the English Poets*, published in 1818, in which some of Coleridge's prose is described as " dreary trash." Yet Hazlitt makes ample amends by eloquent praise of his former friend's poetry and conversational powers : " He talked on for ever ; and you wished him to talk on for ever." Cary in his turn is scarcely just to Hazlitt's style, which, though brilliance is certainly one of its qualities, does a great deal more than merely " sparkle." But Cary, like Lamb, had few favourites among modern writers.

CHAPTER 5. THE *LONDON MAGAZINE* AND THE "LONDONERS" (1819—1825)

CARY's acquaintance with Coleridge led to much more than the success of the Dante. The general recognition of his merits as a translator soon began to have an effect upon his position in the world of letters. Within a year or two he received several proposals to undertake literary work of a different nature; and his acceptance of one of them determined his activities for the next four or five years.

The first of these proposals was also the most ambitious; nothing less than that Cary should undertake for Messrs. Taylor and Hessey the editing of a new quarterly review, to be conducted, he tells Price, "on principles of fairness, without any bias from party spirit." Political prejudice was, of course, the great defect of both the Whig *Edinburgh* and the Tory *Quarterly*, the only reviews of the kind then existing; and it is perhaps to be regretted that the present plan ultimately fell through. A non-party review might have helped to draw a line between pure literature and politics, then so imperfectly distinguished, and more justice might have been done to poets like Shelley and Keats. Taylor and Hessey, who formed their plan towards the end of 1818, were at first eager to go on with it; but Cary felt doubtful from the start. Writing to Price on New Year's Day, 1819, he discusses the project at length in a letter of some interest:

I thought it ungracious to give a direct refusal, and said

I would take a little time to consider their scheme. Since then I have spoken of it to Mr. Gillman, Mr. Coleridge's host and friend, and whom I have also found disposed to be friendly to myself, a man of strong natural sense, and of attainments superior to those of most men whom one meets with ; and he has advised me to make a trial of this matter, at least for a time, only stipulating that I shall not be known as the editor. Still there is one part of the undertaking that is so much out of my way, that if *that part* must fall to my own management, it would determine me to decline it altogether. It is the reviewing of new publications. Now it has occurred to me that you were once engaged in this trade of a critic, and that you might have no objection to resume it, particularly if it were (as it must be) made more profitable to you than before. Their wish is that the task should be performed with a better temper than has been usually shown on such occasions, and that more pains should be taken to search out for the beauties than the faults of the books that are to be reviewed. My neighbour, Mr. Gillman, is of opinion that without a strong spicing of ill-nature, nothing of this kind can be made palatable to the public, and that the attempt would therefore probably fail. My answer was, that as the medical men had lately prevailed on many to leave off stimulants, I saw no reason to despair of our being able to do something of the same kind as to the palate of the mind. At any rate I think this is not a point of view in which their scheme would meet with your disapprobation or refusal, any more than it would with mine. Let me hear in a few days, if you can make up your mind so soon, what you think of this.

Price seems to have been quite willing to undertake his share of the work, but Cary, "on better judgment making," decided that the task was beyond him. He writes to Price again, on February 9 :

You would have heard from me sooner, if our joint labours

had been engaged to the booksellers. Their plan, however, appeared on further disclosure to be so extensive that I shrank from the task that would have devolved on me as editor. Not only a review of the best books that are published, but of the political occurrences of the times, of the progress made in science, and of the fine arts, was requisite, besides the arrangement of the correspondence they should receive; and though they intended to employ different hands for the treating of their different matters, yet it would have been unpardonable folly in me to make myself in any way responsible for what I should not be competent even to understand.

There can be no doubt that Cary's was a wise decision. He was not a Gifford or even a Jeffrey, and the harassing duties of editing in the "grand style" would have weighed heavily on his gentle and retiring nature. Whether Taylor and Hessey, on his refusal, tried elsewhere and failed again, or whether they also decided that discretion was the better part of valour, we do not know. At any rate, nothing more is heard of the project. It has a sequel, however, two years later, when negotiations were on foot for the vacant editorship of the famous *London Magazine*. This we may conveniently deal with now.

The *London Magazine*, the most brilliant monthly miscellany of the century, belonged to a lighter type of periodical than the great quarterlies, and was started in January, 1820, three years later than *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* and more or less definitely in rivalry with it. The first editor was the ill-fated John Scott, a talented journalist, who had edited a newspaper, the *Champion*. The real life of the *London* was only four or five years, for by the end of 1824 its original readers had lost all interest in it, and it lingered only as a ghost of its former self. But in its prime

there was nothing like it ; nor has there been since. Lamb, De Quincey, Hazlitt, Landor and Carlyle were its contributors, regular or occasional, of the first rank ; among the best-known of the second order were Hood, Procter, Darley, Allan Cunningham, John Clare, and Cary himself.

With the first and most sensational chapter in its history we are not directly concerned. It ends in February, 1821, in a field near Chalk Farm, where John Scott lay mortally wounded in the most "tragi-comical" duel recorded in the annals of English literature. Lockhart, of *Blackwoods*, whom Scott had rashly attacked in the *London*, J. H. Christie, Lockhart's second (who fought the duel for him), Hazlitt, and that rather shady person, P. G. Patmore, were the chief others concerned in this business. Duels are seldom as romantic as the popular idea of them ; but the curious for information on this one may be referred to the excellent pages of Andrew Lang's *Life of Lockhart.*

Scott seems to have been a born editor. His own writings are not remarkable, but his achievement in setting the *London Magazine* firmly on its feet within a year is memorial enough for any man. He secured Hazlitt as a contributor to the first number, and when Lamb began his series of "Elia" essays seven months later the success of the new periodical was assured. Nevertheless the first publishers, Messrs. Baldwin, Cradock and Joy, seem to have lost interest in their venture when Scott was killed ; it is a little difficult to see why, but perhaps they were afraid of another duel. It is with the arrangements for dealing with the sudden loss of their editor, and the negotiations with Messrs. Taylor and Hessey for the transfer of the proprietorship, that Cary comes on the scene.

On February 27 Scott died, and the publishers turned first for assistance to Hazlitt, who had been among the most

active contributors ; but we can scarcely think that, with his downrightness and his proneness to quarrel, he would have made a successful editor even if he had wished to undertake the duties permanently. However, as Mr. Howe, his biographer, has shown, he consented to think the matter over, and in the meantime to act as temporary editor for the April and possibly the May number. Some time during March Robert Baldwin, the leading partner among the first proprietors, seems to have consulted his friend Taylor on the question of an editor, and the result was a letter from Taylor and Hessey to Cary (the " other gentleman " referred to here was evidently Hazlitt) :

Fleet Street, April 6, 1821.

Dear Sir,—We have communicated with Mr. Baldwin on the Subject of the London Magazine, and we find that nothing is at present concluded, but that he is in Correspondence with another gentleman—if that correspondence should not lead to a final arrangement Mr. Baldwin will be happy to have an Interview with you, and he will apprize us of the result. In the meantime he will have great Pleasure in receiving an Article for the Magazine—indeed at this time it will be a very desirable help to him, under the inconveniences arising from the loss of poor Scott. I believe I mentioned to you that Ten Guineas per Sheet is the rate at which they pay for Communications.

We are, Dear Sir, Yours very sincerely,
Taylor & Hessey.

The original is endorsed by Cary " Editing London Magazine," which puts its precise meaning beyond doubt. He seems to have been quite willing to undertake the editorship should it be offered, and sent to Baldwin a short paper, " On Gray's Opinion of Collins," through Taylor, who

wrote again on May 7 : "We have received the enclosed Proof of your Article from Mr. Baldwin for your correction. . . . If you have an opportunity of calling in Fleet Street in a day or two we shall be happy to have some further Conversation with you on the Subject of the Magazine."

Whether Cary called we do not know ; if he did he learned that negotiations with Hazlitt were still pending, and that Taylor and Hessey had by now agreed to purchase the magazine from Messrs. Baldwin, Cradock and Joy. On May 9 Baldwin tells Hazlitt that "the arrangement with Messrs. Taylor and Hessey is completed," [1] and hands over the question of editorship to be settled between him and the new proprietors ; but they seem to have been in no hurry to come to a final arrangement. Probably the ambitious Taylor had already formed the idea of editing the magazine himself. [2] At any rate, he avoids the subject in sending to Cary, on May 18, a definite invitation to become a contributor under the new management :

Fleet Street, May 18, 1821.

Dear Sir,—You will be pleased to hear that we have received Assurances of Assistance from all the old Contributors to the L.M., and that we have reason to be sanguine as to its success. We are of course anxious to make as good a show as may be in our first number, and with the view of keeping up the Interest of the present Subscribers

[1] This letter is printed by Mr. Howe, *Life of Hazlitt*, p. 326 ; that it refers to the purchase of the magazine is put beyond doubt by a letter from Taylor to the poet Clare two days later : "We have purchased the London Magazine from Messrs. Baldwin & Co." (Clare MSS., British Museum.)

[2] In the June number there is an announcement : "Arrangements have been completed for the future Editorship." This must refer to Taylor ; but as Mr. Howe shows, negotiations with Hazlitt did not finally drop till May 30, when this was probably already in print. It looks as if Taylor did not want Hazlitt, whether he was willing to accept or not.

we wish to announce in the next number some of the leading Papers of the one which is to succeed it. For this purpose we shall be much obliged if you can without Inconvenience let us have an Article or two before the close of the month that we may notice them in the Lion's Head [i.e., the editorial notes] . . .

Cary's reply (printed here from his draft), dated May 21, betrays some annoyance at their treatment of him :

In consequence of your note of Saturday last, I wish it to be understood as soon as possible that you must not rely on me as a contributor to the Magazine. I have thought of the matter, and I am sure that it would not be worth my while to give my time and attention to writing for it on the terms mentioned by you the other day, that is 10 guineas a sheet for prose and 15 for verse ; nor should I have sent for Mr. Baldwin the little paper with which you expressed yourselves so much better satisfied than it deserved, if it had not been with the view of being employed in a different way [i.e., as editor].

Cary was right in interpreting Taylor's silence about the editorship as a desire to drop negotiations on that head ; and in a week or two, as Mr. Howe shows, Hazlitt also was out of the running. By the end of May Taylor had decided on the policy, which ultimately proved disastrous, of editing the magazine himself. But this astute negotiator did not mean to gain his point only at the price of losing two of his contributors. What exactly passed between Taylor and Hazlitt is not known, but the latter was induced to retain his connection with the *London ;* and after a suitable interval Taylor proceeded to smooth Cary down by offering higher terms for his articles. Writing on June 9, he sends a copy of his new pamphlet on the currency question :

My Dear Sir,—I take the earliest opportunity, which the publication of my pamphlet this morning allows me, of requesting your acceptance of it, and at the same time of replying to a part of your last letter which gave me some pain. I feel sorry that you should have supposed we intended to pay for your contributions at the rate of 10 guineas a sheet. The manner in which I spoke of the Article on Collins showed that I did not regard it as of an ordinary class—but I was not to set a price on that article, for I considered it among those which would be inserted and paid for by Mr. Baldwin ; nor did you ask me (that I can call to mind) what might be the value we should think right to be set upon it. I told you that the highest price (with one Exception) paid for the Articles of the best of the Contributors to the L.M. was 15 guineas per sheet. We have, since it came into our Hands, increased this to 16 guineas, or 1/1/0 a page—at which rate we propose paying for the article on Collins, which will appear in the next No. I feel after what has been said that I am not to hope for any further Communications, in aid of the Magazine, but if ever you should change your Mind it will give me great Pleasure to hear from you. . . .

The overtures were successful, and Cary replied at once in a mollified tone :

I am sorry that my misapprehension with respect to the terms intended to be proposed to me for writing in the Magazine has occasioned you any pain. I am satisfied with those which you now offer, and when I have leisure and feel myself in the vein for doing anything in that way, I will see what I can do.

On the same day (June 9, 1821) Cary set out on a visit to France ; but Taylor lost no time in clinching the matter. Our next document is a " Memorandum," dated July 16, in which Taylor and Hessey agree to give sixteen guineas a

sheet for a "Continuation of Johnson's Lives of the Poets," by Cary in the *London Magazine*, and to pay him £100 should they wish to republish the work in book form on its completion. This series, which began in the August number of the same year with a life of Thomas Warton, proved the most extensive of Cary's many contributions.

For good or evil, the question of editorship was now settled, and the July number, which contained Cary's first article, bore Taylor and Hessey's imprint for the first time. It is interesting, if idle, to conjecture what might have happened if either Hazlitt or Cary had been engaged as editor. Probably neither would have done as well as Scott; Hazlitt would have been too domineering, and Cary too gentle; but we may be fairly certain that neither of them would have committed the errors of judgment by which Taylor ultimately ruined a thoroughly promising concern. All the same, we must do the new editor and manager the justice of admitting that he made a good start. For a year or two everything seemed to go well. But Taylor tried to do too many things at once; and in the long run the shilly-shallying policy which already appears in the correspondence we have just noticed, and a curious tendency to meanness and irritating slowness in paying the contributors, proved the destruction of the magazine.

This correspondence also, we may note in passing, throws some light on the payment for articles in the *London Magazine*. The "one exception," in Taylor's letter of June 9, to Baldwin's rate for the best contributions was that given to Charles Lamb; a few years later he told Henry Colburn (probably) that he was paid twenty guineas a sheet for *Elia*. Procter says he was paid "two or three times the amount of the other writers"; actually it was just twice as much as the ordinary class of contributors received. Hazlitt at least

was paid not ten but fifteen guineas under Scott, as we learn from a remark of Miss Mitford's.[1] After the transfer to Taylor and Hessey presumably Hazlitt as well as Cary was among the select few whose remuneration was exceeded only by that of the incomparable Elia. The increase to a guinea a page for such contributors was opportune, for Henry Colburn, who had acquired the *New Monthly Magazine* at the end of 1820, was making strenuous efforts to attract some of the best writers away from the *London*.

We may now return to Cary himself. In the summer of 1819, on the publication of the Dante, he had resumed his usual studies, and the Journal, abandoned since 1815, recommences with notes on Routh's *Reliquiae Sacrae* and Æschylus. In March, 1820, we learn of an interesting acquaintance which was later to develop considerably. This was with John Clare, the "Peasant Poet" of Northamptonshire, who had just been given his chance of fame and fortune by the united zeal of Octavius Gilchrist, a "learned grocer" of Stamford, and Taylor and Hessey, who published his first volume of poems in January, 1820. On Clare's first visit to London, early in March, he dined at his publishers' house, and among the guests were Lord Radstock, the pious and valiant admiral who was Clare's best friend among his not very satisfactory crowd of noble patrons, and Cary, who also busied himself in doing what he could for the impecunious poet. On March 8 he asks Price to write a review of Clare's poems, "which, remember that you have told me, you find *surprising* and *beautiful*"; he continues:

> 1,000 copies of his book are already sold, and another edition of 2,000 is preparing. Lastly, the banns are published between him and his Patty. I spent an evening

[1] Quoted by Mr. Howe, *Life of Hazlitt*, p. 309, note.

lately with him at our common bookseller's . . . He has the appearance rather of a big boy who has never been used to company, than of a clown, though his dialect is clownish enough ; and like *all true geniuses,* he was longing to be at home again, and is now there.

The italics are, of course, for Cary himself. "Patty" is Martha Turner, whom Clare married on March 16.

About this time also, I think, Cary must have met the poet Keats, perhaps in company with Clare. This is a relationship of which we should be glad to know more. *Endymion,* issued in April, 1818, by Taylor and Hessey, shows already unmistakable signs that the young poet was reading Cary's Dante with close attention. The forthcoming reissue of the translation was advertised at the end of *Endymion,* and it was no doubt to some small technical point connected with Cary's book that Keats referred in writing to Taylor in June, 1818 : "Remember me to Hessey, saying I hope he'll *Carey* his point." The familiar tone of this suggests that the poet and the scholar had already met at the publishers' house ; at all events they must almost certainly have done so more than once between 1818 and the breakdown of Keats's health in the spring of 1820. It is a pity that no record has survived of the conversation on these occasions. Dante must have been the main topic ; but no doubt they also discussed Italian literature in general, to which Keats felt strongly drawn. Perhaps, too, they exchanged opinions concerning the great French poet Ronsard, whose works Keats borrowed from his friend Woodhouse in 1818, and of whom Cary was to write with penetration in 1822—too late, unfortunately, for Keats to be among his readers. Ronsard at this period was even less read in England (or in France either, for that matter) than Dante had been twenty years before, and a common

admiration for the French as well as the Italian master must have formed a strong bond of sympathy.

Cary does not, I believe, mention Keats in his surviving letters, which are not indeed very numerous during these years; but in his article on Rémy Belleau in the *London Magazine* (April, 1822), to illustrate a description of the chariot of Bacchus in the French poet, he quotes from *Endymion* "the fine picture of Cybele's chariot drawn by lions, as Keats has painted it" (Book ii, 639-647). Cary shows here his usual instinct for fastening on the best; appreciation of Keats's poetry, particularly of the beautiful but unweeded garden of *Endymion*, was not common in 1822.

The influence of Dante on Keats, especially in the remarkable though very imperfect revision of *Hyperion*, has of late years been more clearly recognised. There could be no better evidence of the quality of Cary's translation than the fact that Keats knew the *Divina Commedia* only in the English version, for which, as Leigh Hunt tells us, "he had a great respect." To Cary all Keats's fairly numerous quotations and imitations of Dante can be traced.[1]

The winter of 1820-21 passed quietly for the Cary household at Chiswick, varied only by a month's visit to Cary senior, who now lived at Beveré in Worcestershire, and to Price and other friends in the Midlands. The summer and

[1] For Keats and Ronsard cf. *Works of Keats*, ed. H. Buxton Forman (1900-1901), ii, p. 238-9, iv, p. 166-7; and for the influence of Dante on the revision of *Hyperion*, cf. the notes in E. de Selincourt's edition (1905, new edition 1921). Keats's allusions to Dante are collected in *Dante in English Literature*, ii, p. 244 sq. Dr. Toynbee seems to under-estimate Dante's influence; but he has made amends by pointing out (letter to *Times Literary Supplement*, June 16, 1921, p. 387) that "pure serene" in the famous "Chapman's Homer" sonnet is probably from Cary's Dante (*Paradiso*, xix, 64-5): Keats substituted the phrase for an inferior reading in the first version; so that he probably began to read Cary's translation early in 1817.

autumn of 1821 were spent in a long visit to France, Cary's first sight of foreign lands since his infancy at Gibraltar. Ten weeks in July, August, and September were passed at Versailles with Mrs. Cary's sister, who had married a Frenchman named Corneille ; and in October they were at Dieppe. At Versailles Cary began another of his pioneer studies in literature. The Royal Library, rich in editions of the earlier French poets, gave him opportunities for research, the fruits of which began to appear in the *London Magazine* in the following November. To these pleasant articles we shall return later.

Only one of Cary's letters from France this year has survived, written to his sister from Versailles on September 23, but it is enough to show that he enjoyed the visit immensely. True to his " Parson Primrose " nature, however, he found the continental Sunday a little surprising as well as entertaining : " plays acted, and fêtes danced every Sunday afternoon, in neither of which I have taken a part (except as a spectator at the latter) since I have been here." Cary's visit to France occurred just a year before that of Charles and Mary Lamb, who curiously enough also stayed at Versailles. Both Lamb and Cary, moreover, went to see the great French tragedian Talma. Lamb, whose French was scanty, was not much impressed by the foreign acting ; but Cary, who saw Racine's *Britannicus*, was very well satisfied with his experience : " Never did I see a preacher listened to," he wrote, " with more anxious attention than Talma was the other evening. It was the first time I had been in a theatre for about fifteen years, but would not be the last if I continued at Paris."

How far Cary's acquaintance with Charles Lamb had proceeded by this time is not quite clear. One would like to think that they talked about France before Charles and

his sister set out. There was probably not much intimacy before 1823, but the two "Londoners" were certainly well acquainted by the summer of 1822, and may have met several years before. It is quite likely, in fact, that Cary was introduced to Lamb by Coleridge as early as 1819 or 1820, since both of them were frequently at the Gillmans' in those years. This supposition would agree with what seems to be the first mention of Cary in Lamb's letters. A note to B. W. Procter, unluckily not dated, but pretty certainly belonging to May, 1821, contains the remark: "Mr. Cary wants to see you, to scold you." [1] We do not know what the scolding was to be about, but the sentence suggests that Cary was already on terms of some familiarity with both Lamb and Procter. Perhaps it is not too much to say that Cary had, once or twice at any rate, joined "the Wits" (as Clare called them) in an evening of whist, puns, and conversation at Lamb's rooms in Russell Street, Covent Garden. These were (though he scarcely knew it) Lamb's best days, when his genius was at its highest point, and before he began his progressive migrations countrywards, to Islington and Enfield.

There is, however, another piece of evidence, coming from a very different source, and appearing at first sight to support a rather later date for the first meeting. At Taylor and Hessey's, probably in 1821, Cary made the acquaintance

[1] Mr. E. V. Lucas dates "? Summer, 1821," because Lamb adds a P.S.: "I am sorry the *London Magazine* is going to be given up." From a facsimile of this letter the P.M. looks like "MY 10—18 . . ." the year being doubtful; in the original it is said to look like 1811, but this is impossible. Lamb's only indication of time is "Thursday," and this would agree with the date May 10, 1821, for the letter. Moreover, it was on May 11, next day, that Taylor wrote to Clare that he had bought the magazine (see above, p. 129, note [1]); Lamb had therefore probably heard that Baldwin was giving up the *London*, but did not yet know that Taylor and Hessey were taking it over.

of T. G. Wainewright, a fellow-contributor to the *London*, and afterwards notorious for other exploits. Wainewright is responsible for the following interesting letter :

Friday, May 24, 1822.

Dear Sir,—On this next Monday several friends have agreed to eat their dinner with me, at half-past six *precisely*. Their names are Chas. Lamb, Taylor and Hessey, Cunningham, Clare, and the Ode to Dr. Kitchener [Thomas Hood[1]].

From Mr. Taylor I learn that the first of these is as yet *personally* unacquainted with you—Overlook then the mental distance between the English Dante and the Jack-puddin of the L.M. and allow me to become the much honoured instrument of your mutual introduction. We have an airy bedroom and *well-aired* bed, quite ready for your service.

I remain, Dear Sir,
With great respect your "*Constant Reader*"
T. G. WAINEWRIGHT.

It is, nevertheless, almost certain that either the writer or his informant was mistaken in supposing that Lamb and Cary were not yet acquainted ; perhaps they had not yet met at Taylor's house, and it was hastily assumed that they had not met at all. But from Lamb's note to Procter it is fairly certain that he knew Cary pretty well some time before the institution of the "Magazine dinners," one of which is the theme of Wainewright's letter. To these gatherings we shall return ; it will be convenient first to trace a little further the development of the pleasantest and most interesting of Cary's friendships.

[1] The *Ode* was one of Hood's first contributions to the *London ;* it is a comic address to the author of *The Cook's Oracle, containing Receipts for plain Cookery . . . the Result of Actual Experiments, instituted in the kitchen of a Physician* (1821).

In 1820 Charles Lamb, who was a little over two years Cary's junior, completed his forty-fifth year. Though the essayist and the translator were men of widely different talents—for Cary was primarily a scholar, while Lamb was one of the most original minds of the age—their careers exhibit some curious parallelisms which may partly explain the sympathy they came to feel for one another. Both had prudently avoided making literature their regular profession ; and both had passed the middle of life before finding their public. Cary may be said to have " arrived " in 1819 ; and a year later Lamb at last began to discover the true outlet for his erratic genius in the *Essays of Elia*. A closer bond of sympathy may be traced in the sufferings and disappointments through which each had passed. Cary lost both his daughters, Lamb had none but his " dream children." Even the mental disease which darkened Cary's middle life has its counterpart in Lamb's biography. Everyone knows the terrible story of the fit of madness in which Mary Lamb destroyed her own mother, and how Charles (whose own sanity had seemed for a time to be in danger) devoted his life to the care of his sister. Small wonder then that the care-worn India House clerk felt more and more drawn to the shy clergyman, who proved on better acquaintance to have a most unparsonical sense of humour. Cary, Lamb soon decided, was the right sort of parson and the right sort of scholar too, learned without pedantry, serious-minded without priggishness, and as ready to engage in a bout of riotous punning or to enjoy turning a nursery rhyme into dog-Latin as the least clerical of the " Londoners."

None of Cary's friendships were of very rapid growth ; but by 1823, at any rate, the two were beginning to be something more than simple acquaintances. Early this year, probably, Lamb paid his first visit to Chiswick to inspect the

Hogarth relics and to meet Cary's family. On September 2 Cary paid a return visit to dine with Lamb. Charles and his sister had lately moved to a house at Colebrook Row, Islington, which he describes in a letter written this very day to Bernard Barton, the Quaker poet :

. . . a white house, with six good rooms ; the New River (rather elderly by this time) runs (if a moderate walking pace can be so termed) close to the foot of the house ; and behind is a spacious garden. . . . You enter without passage into a cheerful dining room, all studded over and rough with old Books, and above is a lightsome Drawing room, three windows, full of choice prints.

Here then came the Translator of Dante to take his first of many homely dinners with Elia. Mary Lamb, unhappily, was suffering from one of her periodical attacks, and was away at Fulham ; but very likely Cary's host introduced to him the other female member of his small household, "a silent brown girl," about fourteen years old. This was Emma Isola, the Lambs' adopted daughter, who came to like Cary very much in spite of his formidable knowledge of the Latin which she found so hard.

The letter to Barton just quoted gives us also Lamb's first description of his friend :

Mr. Cary, the Dante-man, dines with me to-day. He is a model of a country Parson, lean (as a curate ought to be), modest, sensible, no obtruder of church dogmas, quite a different man from Southey,—you would like him.

Cary and Southey, however, were not so very unlike one another, except indeed for the fault in Southey to which Lamb here alludes—his intolerance of liberal opinions in politics and of unorthodox religious beliefs. It was this, of course, which had put Lamb temporarily out of humour

with his old friend. An ill-advised remark in the *Quarterly* on the alleged want of sound religious feeling in the *Essays of Elia* was the cause of an estrangement which, fortunately, was soon over. In the heat of the moment Lamb was unable to refrain from retaliating in the *London Magazine* with the famous *Letter of Elia to Robert Southey, Esquire.* He afterwards regretted this, but we cannot be sorry to have it, since it contains, besides generous praise of Hazlitt and Leigh Hunt, the pleasant list of Lamb's friends in which each is touched off in a happy phrase or two. Here, among the rest, we find Cary: "the translator of Dante, still a curate, modest and amiable C."

With his usual reticence Cary did not (so far as appears) notice this handsome little testimonial, much as it must have pleased him. One of his friends, however (probably Price or Wilkes), wrote a sonnet which appeared in the December *London*, signed "An Unworthy Rector," and described as "occasioned by reading in Elia's Letter to Dr. Southey, that the admirable translator of Dante . . . still remained a curate—or, as a waggish friend observed,—after such a *Translation* should still be without Preferment."[1] The sonnet is a somewhat extravagant comparison between Cary's career and that of Dante, ending with the lines:

> What treasures does thy golden key unfold!
> Riches immense, the pearl beyond all price,
> And saintly truths to gross ears vainly told!
> Say, gilds thy earthly path some Beatrice?—
> If bread thou want'st, they will but give thee stones,
> And when thou'rt gone, will quarrel for thy bones!

[1] The writer adds a note: "We suspect, by the way, that this is not strictly the case, though we believe it is nearly so." Strictly speaking, of course, Cary was a vicar; but his only "preferment" was (and remained) the addition of Kingsbury to Abbots Bromley.

Lamb and this anonymous well-wisher were not the only friends who lamented, now and later, the small share of this world's goods which came Cary's way. Landor, as we shall see, expressed his feelings in some vigorous verses, and Wordsworth once said to Dyce : " It is a disgrace to the age that Cary has no Church-preferment ; I think his translation of Dante a great national work." Rogers and others possessed of some influence did their best for him, but nothing came of all their efforts. Cary would have been more, or less, than human if he had not sometimes felt that he deserved better treatment ; but his usual attitude was that expressed in a letter to Clare some years later (October 20, 1832) :

I have never much felt the inconvenience of straiten'd circumstances (for I ought not to talk of poverty) but as they have prevented me from doing as much as I could have wish'd upon some occasions for them. . . . If I had given my attention as much to professional studies as I have to those of a lighter kind ; if I had been as assiduous in the arts by which churchmen often rise, as I have been neglectful of them, I might perhaps by this time have been rich ; but should I have been at all happier ? I much doubt it.

October, 1823, gives us Lamb's first letter to Cary ; it is a good example of how Lamb could stamp his personality on the smallest scrap of his writing. Both brother and sister had been unwell in September, and indeed during most of the summer, and Cary no doubt gave an open invitation :

India House, October 14, 1823.

Dear Sir,—If convenient, will you give us house room on Sunday next ? I can sleep anywhere. If another Sunday suit you better, pray let me know. We were talking of

roast *shoulder* of mutton, with onion sauce. But I scorn to prescribe to the hospitalities of mine host.

With respects to Mrs. C.,

Yours truly, C. Lamb.

This was probably Mary's first visit to Chiswick, and perhaps her first meeting with Cary.

Lamb's next letter, a note acknowledging Cary's translation of the *Birds* of Aristophanes and accepting his invitation to a "Magazine dinner" at Chiswick, belongs to August, 1824, and brings us towards the end of the *London Magazine* period. We may therefore now notice some of the other contributors and the gatherings at which Cary met them. Several writers for the *London* besides Cary figure in the *Letter of Elia to Southey*—"the enthusiast for Wordsworth's poetry, T.N.T[alfourd]," "W[ainewright], the light, and warm-as-light hearted, Janus," "Allan C[unningham], the large-hearted Scot," and "P[rocter], candid and affectionate as his own poetry." With all of these, as well as with Hood, Clare, and several others, Cary was by this time well acquainted.

The famous "Magazine dinners," the chief medium of social intercourse among the many contributors to the *London*, seem to have been instituted by Taylor in 1821 when his firm took over the magazine. It was an excellent way of promoting good fellowship and unity of spirit, and worked very well for a year or two, though unluckily it did not suffice to counteract faults of management. The dinners were held monthly, sometimes at Taylor and Hessey's house in Waterloo Place, Pall Mall, but often at the homes of certain members of the circle who took turns in entertaining their brethren. According to the *Memoir*, the first dinner was given by Cary himself, and among those present

were Lamb, Clare, and James Kenney, the farce-writer, an old friend of Lamb's.[1] "The conversation," says Henry Cary, "which never flagged, consisted of a strange mixture of learning, wit, and puns, bad and good." The host seems to have made the best pun of the day :

At times [continues Henry Cary] the light artillery of the punsters got the better of the heavier ordnance, and all gave in to the joyousness of the moment. Among the rest, I remember that a quotation from one of our elder dramatists provoked a round of puns on the names of various herbs ; the last two introduced had been "mint and anise," when Lamb sputtered out, "Now, Cary, it's your turn." "It's coming" [cummin] was the prompt rejoinder. "Then I won't make another pun to-day," stammered Lamb.

Clare, who had seen very little of London society as yet, and was still as much peasant as poet, was a striking figure at this gathering :

The punsters evidently alarmed him ; but he listened with the deepest attention to his host. With the cheese had been placed on the table a jug of prime ale, imported for the especial use of Clare. As the servant was removing the glasses, Clare followed him with his eye, let his own glass go without a sign of displeasure ; but when the jug was about to follow, it was more than he could bear, and he stretched out both his hands to stop it : the tankard was enough for him, he could dispense with the refinement of a glass.

The dinner at Wainewright's palatial residence in Great Marlborough Street, the theme of his letter to Cary of

[1] Clare's presence would fix the date of this first gathering as April or May, 1822, when he was on his second visit to London ; but Henry Cary is not always to be trusted in details (he prints "Kelley" here, for instance, though there is no doubt that Kenney is meant), and very likely other dinners had been held before this, in the winter of 1821-2.

May 24, 1822, which has already been given, probably came next after this one at Cary's Chiswick home.

Livelier and more interesting sketches of the dinners than the rather bald account given by Cary's son have been left by several of those most frequently present, particularly Procter, Hood, and Clare. These are too long to quote entire, but as they give a very clear impression of Cary's friendships during these years (1821-4), a few extracts may not be unacceptable. Procter, who wrote under the name "Barry Cornwall," was fifteen years younger than Cary, and lived on to receive the homage of Swinburne and many others who adored the memory of Charles Lamb. He wrote a pleasant little memoir of Lamb in 1866, and also a fragmentary autobiography; in both of these he alludes to the "Magazine dinners":

> These meetings were very social; all the guests coming with a determination to please and to be pleased. I do not know that many important matters were arranged, for the welfare of the magazine, at these dinners; but the hearts of the contributors were opened, and with the expansion of the heart the intellect widened also. . . . All the fences and restraints of authorship were cast off, and the natural human being was disclosed.

There is a pleasing simplicity about his descriptions of some of the guests, which recalls very strikingly Lamb's epithets "candid and affectionate." Lamb, he says, "came to most of these dinners, always dressed in black"; he said little and drank in moderation. The stalwart Allan Cunningham, a voluminous writer on themes both Scotch and English, but now remembered only for his fine song, "A Wet Sheet and a Flowing Sea," is described with engaging naïveté as "very Scotch in aspect, but ready to do a good turn to any one." Lamb would have liked the "but." Keats's friend,

J. H. Reynolds, who came always, supplied the condiments of good temper and vivacity at the feast. Clare, like a true rustic, talked chiefly of his delight at the wonders of London. Procter has little to say of Hazlitt and De Quincey, who were less often present, but he has a good deal on Cary ; here are some of his remarks in the memoir of Lamb :

> Cary was entirely without vanity ; and he, who had traversed the ghastly regions of the Inferno, interchanged little courtesies on equal terms with workers who had never travelled beyond the pages of the *London Magazine*. No one (it is said) who has performed anything great ever looks big upon it.

In his autobiography Procter adds some remarks on Cary's translations ; but apart from some sensible observations on the Dante, he does not display much knowledge of them. He credits Cary with a translation not of Aristophanes but of Anacreon, a poet more congenial to his actual translator, Tom Moore.

Finally there was Thomas Hood, the youthful, rather shy sub-editor who, Procter says, " was almost silent, except when he shot out some irresistible pun, and disturbed the gravity of the company." But if Hood, as the baby of the house (in 1821 he was only twenty-two), mostly kept his mouth shut, his eyes and ears were wide open, and his *Literary Reminiscences*, with all their villainous puns, make very good reading, and deserve to be better known. Hood gave up engraving for literature in 1821, when he became Taylor's sub-editor. He wrote a good deal in the magazine, including " Lycus the Centaur," the " Ode to Autumn," and other serious poems composed under the influence of Keats, which give him a better title to remembrance than such crudities as the " Song of the Shirt," or all his mass of

comic writing, now sadly faded. Hood, like Lamb (in Carlyle's ugly but compact phrase), was "sportfully much-enduring," for he suffered grievously from poverty and ill-health, yet remained amazingly cheerful through it all. In later years he lost touch with Cary, but we shall meet him again before the end.

There is pathos in Hood's serio-comic recollections, written in 1839, of the old *London* days, then long vanished :

At that time the London had a goodly list of writers—a rare company. It is now defunct, and perhaps no ex-periodical might so appropriately be apostrophised with the Irish funereal question—"Arrah, honey, why did you die ?" Had you not an editor, and elegant prose writers, and beautiful poets, and broths of boys for criticism and classics, and wits and humorists ? . . . Arrah, why did you die ? Why, somehow the contributors fell away—the concern went into other hands—worst of all, a new editor tried to put the Belles Lettres in Utilitarian envelopes ; whereupon, the circulation of the Miscellany, like that of poor Le Fevre, got slower, slower, slower,—and slower still—and then stopped for ever ! It was a sorry scattering of those old Londoners ! Some went out of the country : one (Clare) went into it. Lamb retreated to Colebrooke. Mr. Cary presented himself to the British Museum . . . and Thomas Benyon gave up literature.

(The mysterious Benyon, or properly Bennion, whom we shall meet again, is one of Hood's little jokes ; he was Taylor and Hessey's head-porter or factotum, and his letters to Clare, which repose where the writer certainly never dreamed they would arrive, in the British Museum, suggest that he had devoted very little time indeed to the tongues.)

After a long account of his friendship with Lamb, which the latter's biographers have made generally familiar, Hood

begins a vivid if rather highly-coloured description of a "Magazine dinner" with an amusing sketch of Lamb and Clare "hobnobbing":

On the right hand of the Editor sits Elia, of the pleasant smile, and the quick eyes—Procter said of them that "they looked as if they could pick up pins and needles"[1]—and a wit as quick as his eyes, and sure, as Hazlitt described, to stammer out the best pun and the best remark in the course of the evening. Next to him, shining verdantly out from the grave-coloured suits of the literati, like a patch of turnips amidst stubble and fallow, behold our Jack i' the Green—John Clare! In his bright, grass-coloured coat, and yellow waistcoat (there are greenish stalks too, under the table), he looks a very Cowslip, and blooms amongst us as Goldsmith must have done in his peach-blossom. . . . No wonder the gentleman's gentleman, in the drab-coat and sealing-wax smalls, at W——'s [probably Wainewright's], was for cutting off our Green Man, who was modestly the last in ascending the stairs, as an interloper, though he made amends afterwards by waiting almost exclusively on the Peasant, perfectly convinced that he was some eccentric Notable of the Corinthian order, disguised in Rustic. . . .

But to return to the table. Elia—much more of House Lamb than of Grass Lamb—avowedly caring little or nothing for Pastoral; cottons, nevertheless, very kindly to the Northamptonshire Poet, and still more to his ale, pledging him again and again as "Clarissimus," and "Princely Clare," and sometimes so lustily, as to make the latter cast an anxious glance into his tankard. By his bright happy

[1] Cary also remarked on Lamb's keenness of vision in a conversation with Alexander Gilchrist, the biographer of Blake. Cary, we are told, "mentioned the curious swiftness of Lamb's reading—'looked at a page as one does at a printed notice on a wall, not following line by line or word by word; one at first thought he was only looking at it.' 'Oh yes, Charles is reading it,' said Miss Lamb."—(*Ann Gilchrist, Her Life and Writings*, ed. H. H. Gilchrist, 1887, p. 271.)

look, the Helpstone Visitor is inwardly contrasting the unlettered country company of Clod, and Hodge and Podge, with the delights of "London" society.

There is much more on Clare, and Allan Cunningham, "the grenadier of our corps," and "the kindly Procter," and De Quincey and others; but we must content ourselves with adding Hood's spirited and exact portrait of Cary:

The Reverend personage on the Editor's right, with the studious brow, deep-set eyes, and bald crown, is the mild and modest Cary—the same who turned Dante into Miltonic English blank verse. He is sending his plate towards the partridges, which he will relish and digest as though they were the Birds of Aristophanes. He has his eye, too, on the French made-dishes.[1] Pity, shame and pity, such a Translator found no better translation in the Church! Is it possible that, in some no-popery panic, it was thought by merely being Dragoman to Purgatory he had *Romed* from the true faith?

A very pleasant day we "Londoners" once spent at a Chiswick parsonage, formerly tenanted by Hogarth, along with the hospitable Cary and, as Elia called them, his Caryatides! The last time my eyes rested on the Interpreter (of the House Beautiful as well as of the Inferno), he was on the Library steps of the British Museum.

[1] Referring, of course, to the *Early French Poets*. Hood adds a note: "I once cut out from a country newspaper what seemed to me a very good old English poem. It proved to be a *naturalization*, by Cary, of a French song to April, by Remy Belleau." This was the poem beginning "Avril, l'honneur et des bois Et des mois," Cary's version of which, one of his best, appeared in the *London Magazine* in April, 1822. Provincial newspapers frequently conveyed (without acknowledgment) poems and even long articles from the London periodicals: the *North Wales Gazette*, for example, reprinted this very poem of Cary's in its issue of April 11, 1822; the same journal also borrowed Lamb's *Roast Pig* and other essays. In his tribute to Lamb Hood makes an apt quotation from Cary's rendering of the poem on the death of Ronsard by his disciple Jean Bertaut.

To complete our picture of the circle we may quote some sentences from the fragments of autobiography written by Clare about 1825, and recently discovered by Mr. Blunden,[1] who has done so much to give Clare his proper place among English poets. Unluckily the completed work has disappeared; but so vivid and accurate are Clare's sketches, even in their fragmentary state, that if the final copy is ever found it will probably prove the best of all the descriptions of the *London* circle. We may here avail ourselves of Clare's jottings to fill one or two gaps in the reminiscences of Procter and Hood. In particular he gives a character of Taylor, who is rather surprisingly neglected by the others:

Taylor is a man of very pleasant address, and works himself into the good opinions of people in a moment; but it is not lasting, for he grows into a studied carelessness and neglect that he carries into a system, till the purpose for so doing becomes transparent and reflects its own picture while it would hide it. He is a very pleasant talker and is excessive fluent on paper currency and such politics. He can talk on matters with a superficial knowledge of them very dexterously, and is very fond of arguing about the Latin and Greek poets with the Reverends . . . that drop into his Waterloo house. He assumes a feeling and fondness for poetry and reads it well—not in the fashionable growl of mouthing spouters but in a sort of whine. . . . He never asks a direct question or gives a direct reply, but continually saps your information by a secret passage, coming at it as it were by working a mine—like a lawyer examining a witness. And he uses this sort of caution even in his common discourse till it becomes tedious to listen or reply.

We must remember that these not very flattering remarks were written when Clare, like Lamb and Cary, had some

[1] See his article in the *London Mercury*, Feb., 1923, pp. 393-8.

HENRY FRANCIS CARY

From a painting by F. S. Cary, exhibited at South Kensington Museum in 1868.

excuse for feeling annoyed with Taylor over his conduct in business matters. Clare's insinuations of underhandedness are unjust, for it is pretty clear that Taylor was always good-hearted and well-meaning; but the sketch describes fairly enough, if very frankly, the publisher's fussiness and rather undue sense of his own importance. Clare also seems to have written an account of Wainewright, who (for excellent reasons) was ignored by Hood and Procter; this is sadly defective, but one sentence vividly suggests the "Corinthian" dandy: "He is about 27, and wears a quizzing-glass, and makes an excuse for the ornament by complaining of bad eyes." There is the same almost photographic effect about the description of Cary at a "Magazine dinner"; it is the best verbal likeness extant, and is fully confirmed by the existing portraits:

. . . And there sits Cary, the translator of Dante, one of the most quiet, amiable and unassuming of men. . . . His eyes are not long on a face. He looks you into a sort of expectation of discoursing and starts your tongue on tiptoe to be ready in answering what he may have to start upon, when suddenly he turns from you to throw the same good-natured cheat of a look on others. He is a tallish, spare man, with a longish face and a good forehead: his eyes are the heavy-lidded sort whose earnest look seems to meet you half-closed. His authorship and his priesthood sit upon him very meekly. He is one of those men who have my best opinions and of whom I feel happy with every opportunity to praise. . . .

We may now consider in a little more detail Cary's personal relations with certain members of the circle. His chief intimacies, as Procter rightly notes, were with Charles Lamb and George Darley; but Darley, though he contributed a good deal to the *London* under Taylor, and certainly

attended some of the dinners, was not prominent in the circle, and is scarcely mentioned in any of the reminiscences from which we have quoted. Cary must have met him in 1822 or 1823, but their intimacy belongs to a later date. Similarly it was not until some years later that Cary knew Carlyle, who became a contributor in 1823, but does not, of course, really belong to the circle at all. With Hazlitt, De Quincey, and Allan Cunningham, Cary had no more than a pleasant but slight acquaintance. He was perhaps a little prejudiced against the first of these by Coleridge, who (with some excuse, though there were faults on both sides) was at this time on very bad terms with his quondam disciple. Hazlitt seldom came to the dinners and was a rather silent guest. De Quincey, like Hazlitt, stood rather apart from the main group of contributors, and Procter, who did not like him, suggests that he was unpopular; but I do not imagine that Cary shared Procter's opinion, and in 1822 he seems to have consulted the Opium Eater on some literary matter.[1]

With Allan Cunningham Cary, like Lamb (who in spite of his "Imperfect Sympathies" got on well enough with all Scotchmen except one) kept in touch for many years; but their intercourse, after the *London* days, hardly went beyond an occasional meeting at Lamb's or Taylor and Hessey's. The *Memoir* of Cary prints a letter from Cunningham of June 30, 1823, accepting an invitation to Chiswick, and adding a tribute to the Dante: "I wished long ago to have told you how deep a hold your Dante had taken of my heart and mind." Here also we may notice, a little before its time, the only further correspondence which seems to

[1] Hessey to Cary, Dec. 11, 1822: "I have heard again from Mr. De Quincey this morning and he assures me he will certainly be in Town to-morrow" (Cary MSS.). But the object of the intended meeting is uncertain.

have passed. After the *London* days were over the Scot found it a hard struggle to make a living by poetry and books on painting, and like Hood and many others he turned to editing "annuals" or presentation albums containing scraps of new verse by popular writers. There was a rage for these useless and mostly hideous volumes in the twenties and thirties of the century, and authors of repute were often pestered beyond endurance to give their services, or rather their name, which was the real commercial asset. It was to beg a contribution for one of these, "a little embellished Annual," that Cunningham wrote in March, 1828, to his old "comrade in arms": "Could you dress me up a romantic French ballad in your strong old English way?" Cary however would not break his rule of remaining anonymous in all occasional publications. "You will remember," he says in replying with a regretful refusal, "that when we formerly went into the field together, it was always with our vizors down." Lamb, who was "hooked into the Gem" (which Hood edited) the same year, strongly approved Cary's policy. He has one of his frequent outbursts against these "combinations of show and emptiness," as he calls them, in a letter to Bernard Barton of October 11, 1828:

. . . I hate the paper, the type, the gloss, the dandy plates, the names of contributors poked up into your eyes in first page, and whistled thro' all the covers of magazines, the barefaced sort of emulation, the unmodest candidateship, brought into so little space—in those old Londons a signature was lost in the wood of matter—the paper coarse (till latterly, which spoil'd them)—in short I detest to appear in an Annual. . . . Wordsworth I see has a good many pieces announced in one of 'em, not our Gem. W. Scott has distributed himself like a bribe haunch among 'em.

Of all the poets, Cary has had the good sense to keep quite clear of 'em, with Clergy-gentle-manly right notions.

Clare and Wainewright, who remain to be noticed, were men of natures widely different both from one another and from Cary ; nevertheless they became more familiar with the translator of Dante at this time than any of the " Londoners " except Lamb. Wainewright we hear little of after the decline of the magazine, though he does not disappear from among Cary's circle of acquaintances until after 1830, when he came to be very much " otherwise engaged " ; but Clare, of whom it will be convenient to speak first, maintained a correspondence with Cary for over ten years, and we shall meet him again in a later chapter.

After Clare's first visit to London, which has already been noticed, the two do not seem to have met or corresponded until April or May, 1822, when the poet was again in London, and attended several " Magazine dinners," including as we have seen that at Wainewright's on May 27. Perhaps it was on this occasion that Clare, whose simple country habits were already being modified, not much to his advantage, by his London experiences, allowed himself to exceed the due quantity of liquid refreshment, with disastrous results. A letter from his humble but faithful correspondent, Tom Bennion, supplies our information. Writing after Clare's return to Helpston, his native village, Bennion reports a conversation with Mrs. Emmerson, a worthy lady who was one of the poet's London protectors :

She commenced her conversation in the usual Theatrical Manner respecting you, first by enquiring if you had not disgraced yourself very much the night you dined with the contributors of the London Magazine, and if you had not given great offence to the Revd. Mr. C[ary] by saying

you wished the churches were all in ashes and the parsons sent to beg their bread. I told her I did not hear you say it, and if you did some excuse was to be made for you, as you might be a little fresh. I told her that Mr. C—— was on very good terms with you so I was sure that he was not offended. She said she heard you was very D[runk]; I told her it was not so, you was very merry.[1]

This might not seem the best way to cultivate the friendship of a clergyman; but Cary lived before "Prohibition" was thought of, and knew the value of a wise tolerance. We can easily imagine Clare's stammered explanation next day, and the friendly smile and the twinkle in Cary's deep-set eyes as he brushed the poet's apologies aside with a hearty invitation to spend a day or two at Chiswick with himself and his family. To Chiswick accordingly Clare went, to be shown the interesting relics of Hogarth and to pay a visit of piety to the grave of James Thomson, the poet of the *Seasons*, at Richmond near by. The *Seasons* had had a great deal of influence on Clare's poetical development; when he was thirteen he had scraped his pence together for weeks to buy a copy. In his first letter to Cary, after his return to Northamptonshire, Clare wrote: "The two days spent at Chiswick have left pleasant remembrances behind them of friendship and hospitality." Clare's first biographer, Martin, in his account of this visit, tells an absurd story of the poet's mistaking his host's wife for his daughter and making love to her; it is too obviously an invention to be considered except in a note.[2]

[1] July 21, 1822: British Museum, Clare MSS. I have revised Mr. Bennion's spelling and punctuation a little.

[2] Mr. Arthur Symons unfortunately gave it a new lease of life by trusting Martin for his information (*Poems of Clare*, Oxford, 1908); he might have found a safer guide in Cherry's *Life and Remains*. Martin's book is an amusing piece of fiction; but it is annoying that most of the documents he "used" (including, it

The correspondence between Clare and Cary, a good part of which has survived, affords many interesting glimpses of their somewhat quaint friendship and of their affairs in general. Clare was the junior by some twenty years, and was of course almost entirely self-educated ; it is evident that he stood a little in awe of the learned translator of Dante, and was eager to hear his opinion on matters both literary and personal. Already in 1822 the country poet's prospects were beginning to look uncertain. The bright hopes kindled in 1820 when, three years after issuing his curiously touching "Proposals for publishing by subscription a Collection of Original Trifles," he at last saw his verses in print, were fast fading. It was becoming evident that he could not live by his pen, even with the help of the small annuity which had been subscribed ; and Clare was neither a good farmer nor a good business man—though by no means the casually inspired bumpkin he has often been represented. Added to his other troubles was almost constant ill-health, due mainly to bad food and the inconceivable squalor and poverty of a poor man's cottage a century ago. It is not perhaps very surprising that Clare slowly grew discontented, moody, and apathetic, and quarrelled with Taylor and other well-meaning but uncomprehending patrons. Between them all they made a sad mess of it, and poor Clare spent nearly thirty years of his life, quite needlessly, in an asylum, though in fact he suffered from no more than a harmless and pathetic hallucination. His life reads like an illustration, devised by the fates, of Wordsworth's terrible lines :

seems, Clare's autobiography) have since disappeared. This story represents Cary as "an elderly gentleman with a wig," possessing a "beautiful young wife" and several grown-up daughters ; but Mrs. Cary was certainly over forty in 1822, and there were no surviving daughters.

We Poets in our youth begin in gladness ;
But thereof come in the end despondency and madness.

During the earlier years of his acquaintance with Cary, however, Clare still had plenty of interest in life, and though his letters contain many complaints of illness and financial troubles, there is much else of more immediate concern to us. We may here deal with the correspondence up to 1825, when there is a gap of several years, and leave the later part for its proper place. Clare's first letter (August 23, 1822) discusses Cary's *Lives of English Poets* and the *London Magazine*, and asks Cary to give an opinion on some of his poems. In his reply (September 1) Cary promises to read the poems as soon as Taylor has finished with them ; he adds some sensible advice on reading, recommending Bacon's essays in preference to Knox's (an imitator of Dr. Johnson). "I was very glad," he concludes, "to hear that your appetite for reading has come again, as I think you said, when I had the pleasure of your company here, that you had in a great measure lost it. I have found a fondness for books one of the chief comforts through life."

Clare's second letter is missing, but from Cary's answer (April 12, 1823) we can guess that the poet was already becoming discontented with his exile from literary society : "Do not wish for a residence near London," Cary writes ; "you would ere long have cause to wish yourself away again. Be contented with seeing the 'freckled fair one,' as I think Cowper calls it, now and then." The same letter tells of an interesting meeting of which we shall hear more :

I had the pleasure of meeting last week with Mr. Wordsworth. . . . I think I scarcely ever met with any one eminent for genius, who had not also something very engaging and amiable in his manners and character. In Mr. Words-

worth I found much frankness and fervour. The first impression his countenance gave me was one which I did not receive from Chantrey's bust of him, that of his being a very benevolent man.

There follows some literary chat about Procter's new volume of poems, *The Flood of Thessaly* (1823) :

Have you seen Barry Cornwall's new volume? He is one of the last writers of blank verse we have ; but I think blank verse is not much in favour with you. The rhyme that is now in fashion runs rather too wild to please me. It seems to want pruning and nailing up. A sonnet like a rose-tree may be allow'd to grow straggling. But a long poem should be train'd into some order.

Cary writes again on January 3, 1824,[1] going into some detail in discussing Clare's poetry :

I often think of you in that walk we took here together, and which I take almost every day, generally alone, sometimes musing of absent friends and at others putting into English Prose old French verses. . . . I am glad to see a New Shepherds' Calendar advertised with your name. You will no doubt bring before us many objects in nature that we have often seen in her but never before in books ; and that in verse of a very musical construction. These are the two things, I mean description of natural objects taken from the life, and a sweet, melodious versification, that particularly please me in poetry ; and these two you can command if you chuse. Of sentiment I do not reck so much.

Cary's opinion of Clare's poetry, artlessly as it is here expressed, tallies curiously with the only recorded remark by Keats, though from an apparently opposite point of view.

[1] Cary dates 1823, but it must be a slip of the pen ; internal evidence makes 1823 impossible. Cherry, who prints this letter, has another impossible date, 1822—apparently a misprint.

Taylor told Clare in 1820 that Keats thought that in his poem *Solitude* " the description too much prevailed over the sentiment." It would not be difficult to " reconcile " or at least explain these pronouncements by transposing them into Crocean terms ; and it is of course true that Clare is a poet of nature—of natural phenomena observed closely, affectionately, in and for themselves—in a sense we cannot strictly apply to intenser poets, more concentrated upon themselves, like Keats or Wordsworth.

In the summer of 1824 Clare, still in feeble health, was again in London. There were more " Magazine dinners," and Clare seems to have paid Cary a second visit at Chiswick, though of this we hear little. The prescriptions of Dr. Darling, Taylor's family physician, who had also attended Keats and Hazlitt, did him little good, and he returned to Helpston still ailing. On September 18 he writes Cary in a doleful strain, concerning his autobiography :

I am ill able to write or do anything else. I thought I was getting well once, but I've not a hope left me now. I have employed myself when able, since I came home, at writing my own life, which if I live to finish it, I should like to trouble you to read it and give your opinion of it ; for my own judgment in such matters is very often faulty.

Cary replies promptly (September 22) with all the help that he can offer—sympathy ; and after a discussion of his life of Chatterton, which Clare had commended, he ends :

I hope you will live many years to write your own annals, more years than I shall or can in the course of nature. But I shall assuredly read with interest whatever of this kind you may think fit to send me.

Three months later Clare writes (December 30) more fully on his autobiography :

I have not yet finished my life. . . . I feel anxious to finish it and I feel also anxious that you shoud see it, and I shall be greatly obliged for your opinion of it, as I mean if I live to publish it. I have gotten 8 chapters done, and have carried it up to the publication of the "Poems on Rural Life," &c. I feel it rather awkard [sic] to mention names, as there are some that I cannot speak well of; that is w[h]ere I feel an objection I cannot flatter over it, and I woud not willingly offend any one. I have made free with myself and exposed my faults and failings without a wish to hide them, neither do I care what is said about me; but if you shoud see anything that might be against me in speaking of others, I shall be thankful of your advice and also your remarks on the thing altogether; for it is written in a confused stile and there will doubtless be found a deal of trifling in it, for I am far from a close reasoner in prose.

Cary, in his next letter (which is again chiefly one of sympathy), writes: "I will read the memoirs of yourself . . . and not fail to tell you, if I think you have spoken of others with more acrimony than you ought." After this letter (dated February 19, 1825) several belonging to the next year or two have unfortunately been lost. In the later correspondence with Cary we hear nothing more of Clare's autobiography, of which, as we have seen, only fragments have been found.

Leaving Clare at this point, we come to the last and certainly the most curious of all Cary's intimacies among the "Londoners." Of Thomas Griffiths Wainewright, art critic, forger, and poisoner, we have had a glimpse in his letter to Cary of May, 1822; but for a more complete picture of this debonair criminal and his relations with Cary, Lamb, and the rest we must go to the magazine itself. Wainewright, who was a painter of some talent, was one of the original contributors to the *London Magazine* under

Scott, who seems to have thought quite as highly of him as of Hazlitt, if not of Lamb. As "Janus Weathercock," and in several other disguises, he wrote a number of clever and amusing, though affected and extravagant, articles on the fine arts, in which, according to the easy-going practice of the day, he introduced a good deal of highly personal matter concerning himself and his friends. It is from these, rather than from the somewhat lurid pages of Talfourd and others who wrote of him after he became a notorious criminal, that we get the truest idea of what he was like in the days of his intimacy with Lamb and Cary.

It is difficult indeed to see as one individual the Wainewright of earlier and later days. The extraordinary callousness and treachery of his crimes, and his almost conventionally "moral" bad end, have thrown a sinister backward light on his earlier years, so that it may seem almost incredible that men like Lamb and Cary should have detected nothing of the future criminal in "kind, light-hearted Wainewright"—that they did not in their mind's eye see broad arrows on his elegantly-cut morning coat, and cropped hair in place of his delicately oiled locks. But it is easy to be wise after the event. Candour compels the admission that the earlier Wainewright not only seemed, but pretty certainly was, a tolerably presentable specimen of the dilettante man-about-town. He was affable, graceful in manner, generous, and a good talker, or at least an "agreeable rattle" both in company and on paper. His pretensions to solid learning or subtle taste were not many; he seems to have been a superior sort of Bunthorne,

> Anxious for to shine
> In the high æsthetic line
> As a man of culture rare,

but it is interesting to notice that Oscar Wilde supported

his claims to rank as a connoisseur of painting.[1] However this may be, in the *London* days nearly everybody liked him ; there are few of whom Lamb speaks more kindly, and as late as 1830 we shall find Cary alluding to him most cordially. Even Hazlitt, who had a skirmish with him in 1820, and gave him a pretty severe castigating in an essay "On Vulgarity and Affectation" in *Table Talk*, seems to have disliked the writer rather than the man. At all events, if we are to believe Macready, Hazlitt was among the guests at a dinner given by Wainewright in 1821, when Cary, Procter, and the actor himself were also present.[2]

In several of his contributions Wainewright expresses his admiration and respect for Cary, to whose "eloquent and classic" translation, he says, he owed his acquaintance with Dante. The most interesting of these references is in an article of January, 1823 : *Janus Weatherbound, or the Weathercock steadfast for Lack of Oil.* This, probably his last contribution, is a sort of valedictory address to the readers, with a series of character-sketches of some of his fellow-contributors, among whom Clare, Cary, and Lamb receive the lion's share of attention. There is both liveliness and good sense in these sketches. The publication of the *Essays of Elia* at the beginning of 1823 having occasioned a half-serious rumour that Lamb did not intend to write any more over this signature, Wainewright gives a mock-solemn account of the "death of Elia," which became a stock joke among the "Londoners." The address to Clare is not unlike that in Hood's reminiscences ; but part of the passage on Cary is worth quoting here. Cary's disguise, "Messer Brunetto," is of course from the *Inferno* (canto xv),

[1] See his essay, "Pen, Pencil and Poison," *Fortnightly Review*, Jan., 1889, p. 41 sq.

[2] *Macready's Reminiscences*, ed. Sir F. Pollock, new edn., 1876, p. 171.

where Dante meets his learned friend, Brunetto Latini ; in one way it is not inappropriate, but it is not altogether a compliment :

Near the banks of the Thames dwells one like the stream, placid and deep, Messer Brunetto ! Many are the benefits I owe him in common with others—(his *opus majus****** ; his elegant Memoirs [the *Lives of English Poets*], replete with candour and substantial criticism, his Early French Poets, a pleasure-plot, quaintly pranked, laid open for public recreation) ; some peculiar to myself—(his countenance and commendation) . . . His translations are nearly unique for closeness and felicity, both as to style and expression. The poetry, however subtle, never evaporates during the transfusion—neither is his penetration partial, but offers fresh proofs of its legitimacy in the sister art [the reference is to painting]. His taste there is singularly grand, pure, and consistent. . . . Before quitting our Brunetto, high esteemed among the magnates of poetry, I must suggest two or three subjects for his pen—Pindar—Petrarcha—but, perhaps, in that exquisite writer he may find " thoughts that lie too deep for tears." If so, we must sympathize and abandon hope.

> Occhi miei, oscurato è'l nostro sole ;
> Anzi è salito al cielo, ed ivi splende ;
> Ivi'l vedremo ancor, ivi n'attende,
> E di nostro tardar forse li dole. . . .
> Morte biasmate ; anzi laudate lui
> Che lega e scioglie, e'n un punto apre e serra,
> E dopo'l pianto sa far lieto altrui.[1]

There are others from whom Englished Excerpta might amuse him, and delight his readers ;—we have no specimen of an English Ariosto ;—Pulci and Bojardo are quite

[1] Petrarch, Sonnet vii in the series " In Morte di Madonna Laura."

unknown. Some green flowers surely might be picked from the chaplets of the Provençals, enumerated by Crescimbeni —or he might afford the involuntary-unlearned an idea of the towering and severe Æschylus !

A considerable degree of intimacy is indicated by these lines, with their delicate but unmistakable allusion to the death of Cary's daughter, and the accurate knowledge they show of his tastes in literature.

References to Wainewright by Cary are of course rare ; for after his arrest none of his old intimates would care to remember him ; and in the *Memoir* of Cary his name does not occur at all. The story of his crimes is too well known to call for many details here ; but for the sake of completeness we may summarise the later career of " Janus Weathercock." In 1828, when he was still meeting Cary and Lamb fairly often, he committed the forgery for which he was arrested and sent to Tasmania in 1837. In the interval, escaping complete detection by a remarkable combination of luck and cunning, he poisoned his uncle, his wife's mother and sister (whom he had persuaded to become insured for a large sum), and an acquaintance in France. None of these murders was finally brought home to him, but there is no doubt whatever concerning the last three at least. Ultimately he was sentenced for the least of his crimes, and, callous to the last, remained a convict in Tasmania, " dreaded, hated, and shunned," says Talfourd, even by his fellow-criminals, until his death in 1852. Moralists as well as criminologists have had a good deal to say about this strange case. It might almost be held sufficient alone to prove that crime is a disease ; for a man whom Cary and Charles Lamb had liked cannot have been utterly bad. But enough of this depressing subject.

Before closing the story of the *London Magazine* with

an account of its decline and fall we may notice some of Cary's appearances in other circles of society during these years. He was not at any time a very assiduous diner-out, but besides his meetings with the "Londoners" and the frequent visits exchanged with Coleridge, he was present now and then at the breakfast or dinner parties given by that indefatigable lounger, Rogers, at his magnificent house in St. James's Place. The rich poet had a high opinion of Cary's literary judgment, which was united with those of Crowe and Wordsworth in consultations upon Rogers's blank verse poem *Italy*. Despite his excessive anxiety to be a famous poet as well as a leader of society, Rogers had a sense of humour, and though his wit was sometimes malicious his company was much sought after. At his renowned breakfast parties the notes of an artificial canary trilled forth wonderful though mechanical music from a cage, while from the head of the table the host would (as Scott said) "crack his jokes like minute-guns" with a regularity almost as unfailing.

We are able to get a pretty good idea of one party at which Cary was present by consulting the journal of the poet Tom Moore, who was among the other guests. Wordsworth also was there; and this is the occasion to which Cary refers in a letter to Clare already quoted. Moore, with his excellent voice and his graceful, superficial verses, was then at the height of his amazing popularity. Whether he was edifying the company by maintaining that Æschylus was dull and Chaucer unreadable, or drawing tears from all the ladies and some of the men by singing "The Minstrel Boy," or "Believe me if all those Endearing Young Charms," he generally contrived to be the centre of interest.

On All Fools' Day, 1823, Moore was particularly pleased with himself. The day began well: "Saw Sir A. Cooper

[Sir Astley Paston Cooper, the eminent surgeon], who apologised for 'giving *such a man* the trouble' of coming to him . . . Begged me to let him see me again, 'as a friend, if I would do him that honour.'" Then he strolls casually to Rogers's, and after some "very agreeable" conversation about *Lalla Rookh* and his last poem, *The Loves of the Angels*, he is asked to stay to dinner. The guests included, besides Cary, Wordsworth, and the latter's wife and sister-in-law, Hallam the historian and Kirkpatrick Sharpe, the friend of Sir Walter Scott. One would like to have seen Wordsworth's astonished stare and Cary's suppressed smile, that *subrisus* which we have heard his friend Digby describe, when Moore propounded some of his original opinions :

Some discussion about Racine and Voltaire, in which I startled, and rather shocked them, by saying that though there could be no doubt of the superior taste and workmanship of Racine, yet that Voltaire's tragedies *interested* me the most of the two. Another electrifying assertion of mine was that I would much rather see "Othello" and "Romeo and Juliet" as Italian operas, and played by *Pasta*, than the original of Shakspeare, as acted on the London stage.

If these remarks shocked them as much as Moore fancied, they managed to retaliate. He continues, with a touch of petulance : "Wordsworth's excessive praise of 'Christabel,' joined in by Cary, far beyond my comprehension." Coleridge was a sore point with Moore. The man was an intolerable proser, of course, and his poetry was a mere rhapsody ; yet somehow nobody despised him. The puzzle is thrust aside with a remark of extremely doubtful sincerity : "The whole day dull enough." Assuredly, as this sample may suggest, Moore's journal makes much better reading nowa-

days than any of his verses. It mirrors with childlike candour this spoiled darling of the public, with his "sparkling, dancing, rosy, Anacreontic, poetical dandyism," as the painter Haydon once compendiously expressed it.

At Rogers's house also, about this time, Cary met Richard Heber, the wealthy bibliophile, half-brother of Bishop Heber, the hymn-writer. As the owner of a library which sold at his death for £60,000, Richard Heber was a bookman after Cary's own heart; and in 1824 he was able to show his friendliness towards the translator by offering him admission to the newly-founded Athenæum Club. Cary writes to Price in November:

> You will stare to hear that I am this day become a member of a new club in London. It professes to consist of the patrons of literature, and of scientific and literary men. . . . Mr. Heber was so good as to write offering to propose me as a member without ballot; and as it was voted *nem. diss.* at the breakfast table that I ought not to decline the honour, I have accepted it. So I am a member of the Athenæum, and one of the Council of Five Hundred; for that it appears is our number. The regulations seem good enough, excepting two, which will be rather hard upon men like me: one, that we are not allowed to play more than half-guinea points; and the other, that one cannot go in after two clock a.m.

The Athenæum, founded in February, 1824, has remained for a century the aristocrat of literary clubs. Croker, Sir Humphrey Davy, and Faraday were the moving spirits in its inception, and they were soon joined by Tom Moore and Sir Walter Scott. Cary, whose means were not equal to those of most of its members, does not seem to have frequented the club very much; but his membership was

a pleasant and useful distinction which, as his letter to Price shows in spite of its jokes, he valued highly. Among other early members were Rogers and Charles Lamb's friend, Crabb Robinson, though Cary does not seem to have known the latter until some years later.

Two interesting acquaintanceships of this period of a somewhat different kind introduce to us Gabriele Rossetti, the parent of four remarkable children and himself a considerable poet in Italian, and William Blake, the poet and mystic. Rossetti made Cary's acquaintance in 1824 through Coleridge and John Hookham Frere, the translator of Aristophanes. He had known Frere for several years at Malta, whither he had fled in 1821, after taking a prominent part in the revolution in his native city, Naples, which was suppressed by the Austrians. At Malta he began his series of learned and somewhat perversely ingenious works on the allegory of the *Divina Commedia*, and on his departure for England Frere gave him an introduction to Coleridge and suggested Cary as the best man in England to consult on the question of publishing his work on Dante. On December 14, 1824, Coleridge wrote to Cary asking him to read Rossetti's manuscript, and recommending the author as "a gentleman, a scholar, and a man of talents," who, he feels, "has a claim on all the services which the sons of the Muses, and more particularly the cultivators of ancient Italian Literature, and most particularly Dante's 'English Duplicate and Reincarnation,' can render him." Cary, with his usual good nature, at once consented, and invited Rossetti to Chiswick. In January, 1825, he tells Price :

I have lately had an Italian staying with me, who thinks he has made great discoveries as to the political allusions in Dante, and wished for my opinion of them. I am inclined to believe them not altogether visionary ; but that like other

framers of hypotheses, he pulls down too much of what has been raised by others to erect his own fabric. His name is Gabriele Rossetti, a Neapolitan Constitutionalist who, like Dante, has been forced to quit his country on account of his politics, which however you may suppose are not violent, as he is befriended by the Freres, in the house of one of whom he resides.

Rossetti's hypothesis roughly was that the allegory of Dante (somewhat as with Spenser) was political as well as moral, and was designed to undermine the power of the papacy. He carried it, as everyone now agrees, to an absurd length ; and Cary, writing to him a few weeks after his visit had terminated, expressed only a somewhat cautious approval of his work :

I have no hesitation in saying that from the interest excited in me by that part which I have already seen, I should conclude the whole to be well worthy of publication. Your peculiar opinions concerning the Allegory will meet with some opposition from the prejudices of the older readers of Dante like myself ; they will in their very novelty carry with them a recommendation to others.

He adds some sensible advice concerning publication, recommending (by no means unnecessarily) that Rossetti should expound his new theories "in as brief, plain, and dispassionate a manner as possible." Rossetti published his edition of the *Inferno* in two volumes in 1826-7 ; in sending Cary the second volume he complained of the slight encouragement he had received from the sale of the first. In his reply Cary praised the poet's "ingenuity, labour, and eloquence," but expressed his own scepticism in unmistakable terms, and earnestly exhorted him to direct his efforts "to some object that shall be more likely to aid you in the support of a rising family." His prudent if unpalatable

advice was followed, and Rossetti, abandoning his theories for the present, betook himself to teaching. In 1831 he obtained the Professorship of Italian at King's College, a small post which was sufficient to enable him to give his children an adequate education. In later years Rossetti kept more or less in touch with Cary, for whom he had a high respect, and we shall meet the family again in a later chapter.

Records of the acquaintance with William Blake are much slighter. The subject is not mentioned in the *Memoir* of Cary, but Alexander Gilchrist, in his well-known *Life of Blake*, cites Cary among the witnesses to the sanity of this strange artist. The translator, we are told, "abandoned, after he came to know Blake, the notion he had taken up of his 'madness,' and simply pronounced him an 'enthusiast.'" The judgment is characteristic of Cary's good sense, and since Gilchrist was acquainted with Cary we may accept his statement. Blake, it will be remembered, used Cary's Dante when in 1825 he began the last of his great series of designs, the illustrations to the *Divina Commedia*, which are certainly the finest things of their kind produced by any English artist. No doubt it was this which brought together the artist and the translator. Crabb Robinson was also visiting Blake in 1825, and found him on one occasion busied with his illustrations, a copy of Cary's Dante lying open before him. Robinson's diary, however, does not mention Cary at this period, and strange as it may seem, it was more probably Wainewright who introduced Cary to Blake. Wainewright, at any rate, has the credit of being one of the few who recognised Blake's genius during his lifetime. It is to be regretted that no account has survived of the interviews between the illustrator and the translator of Dante; for Cary must have felt a keen interest in Blake's

art if not in his mysticism. Gilchrist tells us that after Blake's death in 1827 Cary was among the purchasers of pictures from the artist's widow. He bought a drawing entitled *Oberon and Titania.*

We must now return to trace the somewhat melancholy story of the *London's* brief career under Taylor's management. For a year or two after he undertook the editing everything seemed to go well. The "Magazine dinners" were at their best, most of the original contributors remained faithful, and the work of Cary, the chief new recruit, was a great success. Between August, 1821, and the end of 1822 almost every number contained one of Cary's pleasant papers on early French poets, and to the same period belong many of Lamb's finest essays, including the world-famous *Dissertation upon Roast Pig* and the touching *Dream Children*, perhaps the only essay quite equal to the very best of his letters. From Cary, Lamb, and others we hear at this time nothing but good of Taylor and Hessey. In November, 1821, De Quincey spoke highly to Crabb Robinson of their liberality; and in the following January Cary, in writing to Price, refers to them in terms which show clearly enough that he was as yet well satisfied. He is defending himself for laying aside the translation of Pindar, which he had begun a year or two before: "Hessey and Taylor are good pay," he remarks, "and Pindar himself was too well aware of the advantage of ready money to be angry with me for this temporary desertion." Later in this year Cary, at Taylor's request, invited his brother-in-law to contribute to the magazine, though it is not clear whether anything by Price actually appeared. Cary was also instrumental in securing as a contributor his old friend Crowe. The venerable old poet had been for many years studying

closely the technique of English verse, and his conclusions commanded the respect of Rogers, Moore and others. The results of his researches, four learned and sensible articles on English versification, appeared in the magazine in the early months of 1823. Crowe, whom Cary was now meeting occasionally in London, died six years later at an advanced age.

During 1823 appear the first unmistakable signs that things were going wrong with the magazine. Taylor had overburdened himself with a mass of petty details which should have been left to a business manager, and began to make slips which soon led to trouble. In several instances he stretched his editorial rights too far ; and he was becoming careless and casual in settling accounts.[1] In consequence several contributors were dropping away, as we learn from the first of Lamb's premonitory laments (letter to Bernard Barton, May 3, 1823) :

I cannot but think the *London* drags heavily. I miss Janus. And O how it misses Hazlitt ! Procter too is affronted (as Janus has been) with their abominable curtailment of his things—some meddling Editor or other—or phantom of one—for neither he nor Janus know their busy friend. But they always find the best part cut out ; and they have done well to cut also. I am not so fortunate as to be served in this manner, for I would give a clean sum of money in sincerity to leave them handsomely. But the dogs—T. and H. I mean—will not affront me, and what can I do ? . . . I assure you it teases me more than it used to please me.

[1] Cary's account-book shows that payment was not made separately for each article, but in round sums usually of £10 or £25. An unpublished note from Lamb to Hessey dated June 9, 1824, acknowledges £35 for "Elias of last year," which shows that payment was not made in a hurry.

A month or two before this Cary had written, at Taylor's special request, a laborious review of a new commentary on Dante (by John Taafe, an acquaintance of Byron and Shelley), only to be told that it was too long and to be asked to cut it down. This however he refused to do, and the review appeared complete, in two instalments. In September, 1823, Lamb repeats his complaints : "The London, I fear, falls off" ; and in the following April we get a further sign of the way things were going from the poet Beddoes, who was a great friend of Procter :

> Taylor has lately refused a paper of Procter's and one of Reynolds's, and kept back Darley's reply to Terentius Secundus, for the purpose of introducing that thrice-double demoniac the æconomical opium-eater. Exit London.[1]

Taylor, in fact, never seems to have learned the golden rule of magazine editing, to choose your contributors carefully, and then to give them as free a hand as possible.

Want of tact led to serious trouble in another matter also which considerably, though indirectly, affected the fate of the magazine. This was the vexed question of copyright in articles which, having appeared in periodical form, were afterwards issued in independent volumes. Lamb's *Essays of Elia,* which the firm published in January, 1823, appeared without any definite understanding concerning the copyright, Lamb being merely offered casually a third of the profits of this edition ; and the result was a disagreement which actually culminated in a lawsuit between Taylor

[1] *Letters of Beddoes,* ed. E. Gosse, 1894, p. 24. De Quincey's *Confessions of an English Opium Eater* had appeared as early as 1821 ; the reference here is to his *Notes . . . of a late Opium Eater.* Beddoes made further remarks in a similar strain (ibid. p. 46, 51) ; and Crabb Robinson tells the same tale : Feb. 8, 1824 : Lamb "has taken a disgust of writing for the *London Magazine.*" Dec. 4, 1824 : the magazine is "a sinking concern."

and Moxon, Lamb's later publisher, in 1833.[1] Cary was more careful to avoid any possible misapprehension ; but, as his correspondence with the firm shows, he had a good deal of trouble in pinning them down to plain terms, though neither at this time nor later was there any serious breach. A few details concerning this matter will help to show why the *London* failed—and incidentally, why Cary's two series of articles, the *Lives of English Poets* and the *Early French Poets*, did not appear in volume form at all during his lifetime.

The former series, it will be remembered, had been undertaken on the definite agreement that if Taylor and Hessey reissued it in collected form Cary was to receive £100 a volume, otherwise the copyright was to remain in his hands. For his other writings, however, they refused to make a similar arrangement. In December, 1822, Hessey wrote to Cary proposing that his translation of Pindar should be published by instalments in the magazine : " I hope you will let us have a portion of your Translation of Pindar—we are anxious to have a number of Promises to begin the New Year with." Cary demanded a previous understanding that the copyright should remain in his possession, so that he might republish the whole two years after its appearance by instalments should be completed. Hessey then replied (December 17, 1822) :

In regard to Pindar, we object to giving up the whole of the Copyright, because we do not like the appearance, even, of losing an Author for whom we have published, or a Work

[1] See E. V. Lucas, *Life of Lamb*, 2nd ed., 1905, ii, p. 247. Hessey's letter to Cary of Oct. 13, 1823, which I quote below, also throws a little light on this matter. Evidently Taylor and Hessey assumed, without troubling to make it clear to Lamb, that they had a permanent right to two-thirds of the copyright in *Elia ;* but, as Lamb told Moxon in 1833, " no *writing*, and no *word* " had passed respecting copyright. The lawsuit between Moxon and Taylor rightly went against the latter.

which we have first brought out. But in this Case we have no objection, as the translation will be published as yours, to content ourselves with one third of the future Copyright (the other 2/3 remaining with you) and to pay for it, for the Magazine, at the usual Rate. However, we are by no means desirous of pressing it for the Magazine, if it is at all against your Inclination ; but shall be happy to treat with you for its publication as a separate Work when you have completed it—we think the former Plan would be more immediately beneficial to you as making the Work at once extensively known.

Cary was not satisfied with "the former Plan" ; but in any case his leisure did not at this time permit him to finish the work, and negotiations were dropped for a couple of years. Then in December, 1824, by which time the publishers were beginning to find a difficulty in securing suitable contributions for the magazine, they decided to accept the terms they had objected to in 1822, and an agreement was made leaving the entire copyright to Cary. Only one instalment, however, the version of the tenth Nemean Ode, appeared, in January, 1825. The complete translation did not appear until 1833, when Moxon was the publisher.

In the meantime there had been a good deal of discussion concerning the translation of the *Birds* of Aristophanes (which was not, of course, intended for the magazine) and the *Early French Poets.* After some wrangling (during 1823) Cary secured for the *Birds* a payment of fifty guineas down, with another fifty guineas contingent on the sale of five hundred copies ; but the negotiations on the *Early French Poets* came to nothing. On October 9, 1823, Hessey wrote : "We are thinking of reprinting the French Poets in a volume of the same size as Elia, and we should like to do it now" ; and again on the 13th : "In regard

to the French Poets, the understanding, you know, is that one third of the Profit is given to the Author—on this principle we have published Elia and Cunningham's Tales" [Allan Cunningham's *Traditional Tales of the English and Scottish Peasantry*, 1822.] Cary's draft reply says: "I think you once spoke of making an agreement similar to that which you made with regard to the continuation of Johnson's Lives. I do not see why any difference should be made in the present instance." But they did not take the hint, and the result was that neither work was republished before Cary's death.

We need not therefore be surprised to find that towards the end of 1824 things were getting desperate with the magazine. Lamb, Cary, and Darley were almost the only survivors from the early contributors, and the *New Monthly Magazine* was fast gaining ground. Lamb actually had his first contribution in the rival journal in January, 1825, though he did not yet abandon the *London*. Taylor and Hessey made a last attempt to revive their golden goose by (as Lamb put it) "tying the dead carcase of a Review to a half-dead Magazine," that is, by widening the scope of the journal, increasing its size, and (an odd enough expedient) raising the price from half-a-crown to three shillings and sixpence.[1] But it would not do. "Our second number is all trash," wrote Lamb in February, 1825. "What are T. and H. about? It is whip syllabub, 'thin sown with aught of profit or delight.'" Six months more, and the end came. "Taylor has dropt the London," Lamb told Bernard Barton in August: "It was indeed a dead weight. It has got in the Slough of Despond. I shuffle off my part

[1] Crabb Robinson (Dec. 4, 1824) says that Southern took over the business management then, and was responsible for the raised price; but he did not assume entire control until later.

of the pack, and stand like Christian with light and merry shoulders. It had got silly, indecorous, pert, and every thing that is bad." Cary's last contribution had been in January, 1825, but Lamb, though unwillingly, hung on to the end of the chapter; his last article appeared in the August number. In September the *London Magazine* passed into the hands of Henry Southern and sank into insignificance. Thereafter Lamb's work appeared in the *New Monthly Magazine*, the *Athenæum*, and other journals, while Cary wrote nothing for periodicals from 1825 until the last year of his life.

Despite disagreements Cary, Lamb, and also Darley remained friendly for a good many years with Taylor, who later abandoned the "Bell Letters," and became publisher to the new University of London. Occasionally they dined with him; but the brotherly feeling of the *London* days was a thing of the past. The last gathering which could be called a "Magazine dinner" seems to have been held at Cary's house in August, 1824. In April, 1826, Taylor wrote mournfully to Clare: "Many of your old friends ask after you, but I don't see so much or so many of them as I once did. The loss of the London Magazine cut the string that tied us together, and then I found that what was called Friendship was nothing but Self-Interest."

CHAPTER 6. TRANSLATIONS AND CRITICAL WRITINGS (1819—1825)

With the passing of the *London Magazine* we may pause, before proceeding with the story of Cary's life at the British Museum, to make a survey of his fairly numerous writings between the second edition of the Dante in 1819 and his appointment to the national library in 1826. During these years the greater part of his energies was devoted to journalism; he had one or two, and occasionally three or even four articles in every issue of the *London* from August, 1821, to May, 1823, and his activity was little less remarkable during the remaining months of his connection with the magazine. Nevertheless he found time also to translate the *Birds* of Aristophanes, which he published in 1824, and to work a good deal at his version of Pindar, which was however not completed until 1833, and will be dealt with in its proper place.

About two-thirds of Cary's contributions to the *London* (which number about sixty in all) belong to the two connected series which were collected and issued separately in 1846 by his son Henry; these are the *Early French Poets* and the *Lives of English Poets from Johnson to Kirke White, designed as a continuation of Johnson's Lives*. The remaining one-third consists of miscellaneous pieces mostly of slighter interest, which (except two or three given in the *Memoir*) have not been reprinted. Of the three groups much the most interesting is the pleasant little series of essays on the

French poets before Malherbe, illustrated with a large number of graceful and accurate translations. After the Dante, these were certainly Cary's greatest achievement; Charles Lamb, as we shall see, at one time actually preferred them to the better-known work. Without going quite so far as this (and the two are of course scarcely comparable), we may certainly agree that no one else except Dante Gabriel Rossetti and perhaps Leigh Hunt has been so successful in the difficult art of lyrical translation; and neither of these dealt much with French poetry.

We have seen how, during his visit to France in 1821, Cary collected his materials for the *Early French Poets*, which appeared in the magazine between November, 1821, and April, 1824. The importance of these dates can only be realised when we call to mind the state of French literature when Cary wrote, and the almost complete neglect of the poets before Malherbe, not only in this country but in France itself. Cary, in fact, was first in the field in his dealings with Marot and Du Bellay and the rest, just as in his earlier work in Provençal and Italian poetry. The prevailing attitude in France at this time was one of cold indifference to all poetry not sanctioned by the blessing of Boileau and the "correct" school of the eighteenth century; as Cary wrote in his essay on Marot:

> The French of the present day, I know, set but little store on these revivers of the poetical art. Their extreme solicitude for what they call the purity of their language makes them easily offended by phrases the irregularity of which we should be ready to pardon in consideration of higher excellence, or even to welcome as so many means of aiding us in that escape from the tameness of common every-day life which it is one great end of poetry to effect. I do not know of any other people who have set up an exclusive

standard of this sort. . . . What reply should we make to a critic that would fain put us out of conceit with some of the finest things in Spenser and Shakspeare, because they were cast in a mould utterly differing from that impressed on the language of our politer circles, though similar enough to the stamp of our country-folks' talk ? Let any one take up Voltaire's commentary on the tragedies of Corneille, and he will see to what a pitch this fastidiousness has been carried in the instance of a writer comparatively modern.

This is perfectly sound criticism ; and it is truly remarkable when we consider that Sainte Beuve was at this time a mere youth, that neither Victor Hugo nor Alfred de Vigny had begun to write, and that no English critic had yet shown the slightest sign of interest in early French poetry. Lamb and Hazlitt, of course, confined their attention mainly to English writers ; but even Coleridge and Shelley, who were widely read in German and Italian, failed to discover that in French there was, behind all the more recent " classical " literature (which they disliked and in part misjudged), a great mass of writing nearer both in form and in spirit to our own Elizabethan and Jacobean poetry and drama. As with Dante so with Villon and Ronsard, once a start had been made appreciation became easy, and English students of early French literature abound in the middle and later nineteenth century. Translators like Rossetti, Swinburne and Andrew Lang, or essayists like Pater and R. L. Stevenson, often go beyond Cary in accuracy and subtlety of interpretation ; but it is scarcely too much to say that their achievements would not have been possible without his pioneer work.

The Early French Poets does not pretend to be more than a literary *causerie* on poets and dramatists before 1600. With one exception (Thibaut of Navarre) Cary's twenty-

three poets range chronologically from Villon and Alain Chartier to Desportes and Jean Bertaut; the majority, however, belong to the sixteenth century. No poet of importance is ignored, but naturally Cary was not always able to procure all the works of a particular poet, or to gather as much biographical information as he desired. His aim, consequently, was to produce not a systematic historical account, but a readable introductory sketch, with enough translated specimens to encourage the intelligent reader to explore further for himself. In carrying out this plan Cary was remarkably successful. Each paper gives an outline of the poet's life, illustrated by quotations which, like Ronsard's now well-known sonnet to de Baïf or the elegy on Ronsard by Jean Bertaut, have a biographical interest. There follows an account of the longer works, with extracts, and specimens of the more successful lyrical poems. Cary seldom misses an opportunity of introducing, by way of allusion or illustration, his favourite Greek and Italian poets; he indicates the debt of Du Bellay, Desportes and others of the Pléiade to Petrarch, and has some interesting, if not quite sound, observations on Ronsard's imitations of Pindar. He does not forget Spenser in dealing with Marot and Du Bellay, and the links between Chaucer and some of the earlier French poets are duly pointed out. Throughout, Cary (who was not afraid of comparisons) prints the original beside his English rendering; and most of his versions come through this severe test with flying colours. As a rule they are surprisingly faithful and at the same time natural and idiomatic English, often with a faint touch of archaism reminiscent of our own sixteenth century poets, and entirely appropriate to the style of an age before "Malherbe vint." This last quality is strikingly evident in the extracts from the dramatists. In introducing a long speech by the hero in

the *Hippolyte* of Robert Garnier, Cary remarks : " Had Mr. Charles Lamb met with a similar passage in one of our old dramatists, I do not think he would have passed it unnoticed" ; and from the translation which follows we may see that Cary was not less deeply read in the Elizabethan drama than the editor of the *Specimens of English Dramatic Poets*. Here are a few lines to show it ; the theme is Hippolyte's forebodings of evil :

> I have a heart
> Too stout to be the prey of a false dream.
> This is not all that frays me ; for a dream
> Should not itself be cause of our annoy ;
> Since 'tis no more than a vain empty shadow,
> And no presagement of the thing to come.
> These four or five nights past, the owlet ne'er
> Hath ceased lamenting on our palace roof ;
> And soon as in their kennel stall'd, my hounds
> Howl like to forest wolves. Our castle towers
> Are black with ravens, perched night and day,
> Sepulchral birds that will not quit their seat,
> Though driven, save when I go forth to hunt ;
> And then it seems as all took wing at once
> From the steep battlements, and croaking round me,
> Accompanied my steps this way and that,
> Flapping their dismal pennons in mid air,
> Self-balanced, like a thick and low-hung cloud.

In dealing with lyrics Cary's success is naturally more varying, but there are few failures, and he nearly always picks out the best things for his readers. Everyone nowadays knows the " Vanneur de Blé aux Vents " and " Dieu vous gard," but a century ago few Frenchmen, and scarcely any Englishmen, cared to read them. Even from Villon, whom Cary failed to understand as a whole, the

finest morsel, his famous *Ballade des Dames du Temps Jadis*, is chosen. No one, I think, had attempted this in English before Cary ; and the reader may like to have his version to compare with the innumerable later ones by Rossetti, Andrew Lang, and others :

Tell me where, or in what clime,
Is that mistress of the prime,
Roman Flora ? she of Greece,
Thais ? or that maid so fond,
That, an ye shout o'er stream and pond,
Answering holdeth not her peace ?
—Where are they ?—Tell me, if ye know ;
What is come of last year's snow ?

Where is Heloise the wise,
For whom Abelard was fain,
Mangled in such cruel wise,
To turn a monk instead of man ?
Where the Queen, who into Seine
Bade them cast poor Buridan ?
—Where are they ?—Tell me, if ye know ;
What is come of last year's snow ?

The Queen that was as lily fair,
Whose songs were sweet as linnets' are,
Bertha, or she who govern'd Maine ?
Alice, Beatrix, or Joan,
That good damsel of Loraine,
Whom the English burnt at Roan ?
—Where are they ?—Tell me, if ye know ;
What is come of last year's snow ?

Prince, question by the month or year ;
The burden of my song is here :
—Where are they ?—Tell me, if ye know ;
What is come of last year's snow ?

Though this fails in the Envoy, and is besides a little clumsy here and there, it is at any rate not sophisticated like some later versions.

Cary's average quality is a good deal higher, and can be more fairly judged by his translations from sixteenth century lyrics. He is at his best with Ronsard ; but we will content ourselves with quoting some stanzas from a slightly less well-known poet, Rémy Belleau. Cary's rendering of the charming *Song to April* echoes faithfully the dancing measure of the original : [1]

April, sweet month, the daintiest of all,
Fair thee befall :
April, fond hope of fruits that lie
In buds of swathing cotton wrapt,
There closely lapt,
Nursing their tender infancy.

April, that dost thy yellow, green, and blue
All round thee strew,
When, as thou go'st, the grassy floor
Is with a million flowers depeint,
Whose colours quaint
Have diaper'd the meadows o'er.

* * * * *

Sweet month, thou seest at this jocund prime
Of the spring-time,
The hives pour out their lusty young,
And hear'st the yellow bees that ply
With laden thigh,
Murmuring the flowery wilds among.

[1] Cary's unfashionable fidelity in translation is well illustrated by this poem, as compared with the next English version to appear, that in Louisa S. Costello's *Specimens of Early French Poetry* (1835). Her translations are much too " sweetly pretty " ; as an example

May shall with pomp his wavy wealth unfold,
His fruits of gold,
His fertilising dews that swell
In manna on each spike and stem,
And like a gem,
Red honey in the waxen cell.

Who will may praise him ; but my voice shall be,
Sweet month, for thee ;
Thou that to her dost owe thy name,
Who saw the sea-wave's foamy tide
Swell and divide,
Whence forth to life and light she came.

The critical remarks in Cary's essays have the merit of a fresh and sincere judgment, and the charm of an exciting and occasionally hazardous exploration. It would be too much to expect that the criticism should always be as sound as the translations ; yet except with Villon and one or two more of the earlier poets, Cary never goes far astray, and as an introduction to French poetry of the sixteenth century, with which it is mainly concerned, the book is even now not out of date. The unfortunate accident of Cary's failure

I give her rendering of the first stanza of this one, with the French original :

April, season blest and dear,
Hope of the reviving year,
Promise of bright fruits that lie
In their downy canopy,
Till the nipping winds are past,
And their veils aside are cast.

Avril, l'honneur et des bois,
Et des mois :
Avril, la douce esperance
Des fruicts qui sous le coton
Du bouton
Nourrissent leur jeune enfance.

to follow up his success in the *London Magazine* by reissuing the articles in a volume partly accounts for the neglect into which the work soon fell ; and an adequately revised reprint should certainly prove successful.[1]

Here, perhaps, we may suitably notice Cary's scattered translations from Italian lyrical poetry. They are less numerous than his French renderings, and were never collected or arranged systematically. It may seem strange that there should be no companion volume to the *Early French Poets*, since Italian literature was always first in Cary's affections. The project could not fail to suggest itself, and indeed a start had in a sense been made some years before, with the translations from Dante's minor poems and from Cavalcanti, Guinizelli and others which were first printed in the 1819 edition of the Dante.[2] In 1823 Cary seems to have planned a series of articles on Italian lyrical poetry, and papers on Guittone d'Arezzo and Lapo Gianni appeared in the *London Magazine* in November and December. The proprietors welcomed the new enterprise, and Hessey wrote : " I am very glad to see the Early Italian Poets in your hands, and so I am sure will your friends

[1] This description can scarcely be applied to the only reissue since 1846, that edited by Mr. T. Earle Welby (1923), which is rendered useless by a truly amazing number of misprints and by the most unwise excision of the French texts. I must not omit to mention the only just estimate of Cary's book which I have seen, a suggestive and stimulating article by Sir Edmund Gosse, who speaks with authority, in the *Sunday Times* of Feb. 24, 1924.

[2] In the *Life of Dante* were given four sonnets by Dante (two from the *Vita Nuova*), another sonnet now considered spurious, and a passage from the third Canzone in the *Convivio*. In notes to *Purgatorio* xi, 96, and xxiv, 20 and 56, there were specimens from Cavalcanti, Guinizelli, Bonagiunta di Lucca and Guittone d'Arezzo. All these are accessible in modern reprints of the Dante. The remainder have not been reprinted. Besides the *London Magazine* articles mentioned below, there are later scraps in the *Memoir* (ii, p. 308-9) and in the *Gentleman's Magazine* (1846-7) which will be noticed in chap. viii ; but these are inconsiderable.

be." But the pressure of other work, and the decline of the magazine itself during 1824, determined Cary to lay aside the project, and it was never carried out. Later it took a different and more ambitious form ; for many years Cary cherished the idea of producing a more or less elaborate critical work on Italian poetry which should include translated specimens. But as we shall see, for various reasons the projected *History of Italian Poetry* came to nothing ; and a systematic series of translations was left to be produced a generation later by Dante Gabriel Rossetti.

Slight as is the sum-total of Cary's versions from Italian lyrical poetry, they deserve a little attention if only on historical grounds. Most of them are from the earlier poets (before Petrarch), and in this difficult field Cary's were almost entirely first attempts in English. Petrarch had had a fair amount of attention, but only four sonnets of Dante had appeared in translation up to 1819, and of his contemporaries, I believe, nothing at all.[1] Hence Cary was the first to give the English reader even a glimpse of the rich territory of the early Italian lyric. Our present point of view, a century later, is very different ; in particular, of course, D. G. Rossetti's remarkable volume, *The Early Italian Poets* (1861), has overshadowed all earlier work of the kind. But Cary's work, which Rossetti can hardly have failed to know, deserves to be remembered as first in significance among the latter's forerunners. That the few renderings modestly tucked away in the introduction and notes to the

[1] Hayley had "imitated" the 'Guido vorrei' sonnet in 1782. In 1806-7 Capell Lofft did this and three other sonnets ; only one ('Deh peregrini') was retranslated by Cary. In 1816 appeared Shelley's version of 'Guido vorrei.' Nothing else seems to have been printed before 1819. There was no English version of the *Vita Nuova* until 1846 (by Joseph Garrow), and none of the *Canzoniere* before 1835 (by Charles Lyell, whom we shall meet in chap. viii).

Dante did not thereby fail to attract some attention at least, is indicated by an interesting letter of Elizabeth Barrett, the future Mrs. Browning, in which she says that Wordsworth, at their first meeting, in 1837, recited to her one of Dante's sonnets in the translation by Cary.[1]

These few translations are remarkably competent in spite of the heavy technical difficulties which had to be faced at this period. The texts available were often unsatisfactory, and even in Italy little had yet been done to elucidate the frequently obscure symbolism of the poets of the "dolce stil nuovo." Yet comparison between Cary's versions and Rossetti's reveals that there is not very much to choose between the two in the poems which both attempt; their standard of fidelity is very nearly the same—leagues removed, that is, from the paraphrases and imitations of the eighteenth century school. Cary's versions of the "Beltà di donna" sonnet of Cavalcanti and of Guinizelli's "Voglio del ver la mia donna laudare" are equal to Rossetti's; and in those from Dante he falls little if at all below his successor. In the playful sonnet sent with the *Vita Nuova* to "Messer Brunetto," Rossetti is a little more accurate, but Cary comes nearer the humour of the original by keeping the feminine rhymes in the octave. The two versions of a very different poem more characteristic of Dante, the first sonnet in the *Vita Nuova* itself, may be given as a fair example of the comparison:

Cary.

To every heart that feels the gentle flame,
To whom this present saying comes in sight,
In that to me their thoughts they may indite,
All health! in Love, our lord and master's name.

[1] *Letters of E. B. Browning*, ed. F. G. Kenyon (1897), i. p. 47.

Now on its way the second quarter came
Of those twelve hours, wherein the stars are bright,
When Love was seen before me, in such might,
As to remember shakes with awe my frame.
Suddenly came he, seeming glad, and keeping
My heart in hand ; and in his arms he had
My Lady in a folded garment sleeping :
He wak'd her ; and that heart all burning bade
Her feed upon, in lowly guise and sad :
Then from my view he turn'd ; and parted, weeping.

Rossetti.

To every heart which the sweet pain doth move,
And unto which these words may now be brought
For true interpretation and kind thought,
Be greeting in our Lord's name, which is Love.
Of those long hours wherein the stars above
Wake and keep watch, the third was almost nought,
When Love was shown me with such terrors fraught
As may not carelessly be spoken of.
He seemed like one who is full of joy, and had
My heart within his hand, and on his arm
My lady, with a mantle round her, slept ;
Whom (having wakened her) anon he made
To eat that heart ; she ate, as fearing harm.
Then he went out ; and as he went, he wept.

Rossetti's is better in the fourth line, Cary's missing the emphasis in "cioè Amore," but Cary is more successful with the eighth line, and he gives "subitamente" its full value, while Rossetti is obliged to omit it altogether. Perhaps neither here can claim any striking superiority. But we must remember that general comparisons are put quite out of the question by the much greater bulk and the uniform high quality of Rossetti's collection.

Of the remaining connected series of articles contributed to the *London Magazine*, the *Lives of English Poets*, there is not much to be said. They are little more than competent journalism, and can lay no claim to permanent value. Their chief interest for us is in the evidence they furnish of the development of Cary's taste, and in a few personal touches which he introduces in writing of poets like Hayley and Erasmus Darwin, with whom he had come in contact; from some of these we have already quoted. The plan excluded Cary's favourite Gray, with whom Dr. Johnson had dealt—though in Cary's view by no means adequately—in the famous series of which these articles were a continuation. For some unknown reason Cowper, another favourite, was also neglected for the present, though in 1839 Cary edited his works with a brief introduction of but slight interest.

The subjects treated in the *London Magazine* series were therefore not very congenial to Cary. He was prejudiced against Dr. Johnson (though not so much as Miss Seward had been), and the poetry, at any rate, of Goldsmith was not much to his taste. He is a great deal more interesting on Chatterton; his remarks on the unhappy life of this "marvellous boy" are full of charity, and there is considerable acuteness in his analysis of the non-medieval elements in the *Rowley Poems*. The minstrel's song in *Ælla* and the *Excellent Ballad of Charity* he rightly considered little masterpieces;[1] and in the companion life of Kirke White the gulf which separates genius from talent is pointed out in a few lines:

[1] In a letter to Clare, Sept. 22, 1824, Cary gives enthusiastic praise to the *Ballad of Charity*: "I do not know any story for the length of it so well told. It seems as if it was all passing before your eyes."

Mr. Southey has truly said of him [White], that what he is most remarkable for is *his uniform good sense*. To Chatterton, with whom this zealous friend and biographer has mentioned him, he is not to be compared. Chatterton has the force of a young poetical Titan, who threatens to take Parnassus by storm. White is a boy differing from others more in aptitude to follow than in ability to lead. . . . . He has little distinct character of his own.

Among the other minor poets included are most of those who had been objects of worship in Cary's salad days—Mason, Hayley, Darwin, and the Wartons—but the once great and glorious Miss Seward is ignored, and thirty years of study had changed his opinions a good deal. Mason on liberty is placed beside Coleridge's *France, An Ode*, and almost "vanishes away" in the comparison; Darwin is but faintly commended for his "singularity"; and Hayley gets praise chiefly for his useful work in promoting Anglo-Italian studies.

To extend a little our view of Cary's tastes in modern English poetry we may conveniently allude here to his later fugitive writings on the subject, which include some interesting remarks on more recent poets than those dealt with in the *London Magazine*. There is nothing much, however, in any of the introductory sketches written from about 1838 for editions of Milton, Pope, Cowper and others, though the short life of James Thomson yields an agreeable anecdote concerning Coleridge. After telling the well-known story of Thomson's laziness—that he used to eat fruit as it hung, without troubling to pick it—Cary continues:

On my once speaking of this with Mr. Coleridge, he observed that there was nothing remarkable in it, for it was no more than he used to do himself at Malta. But I

doubted whether this was so much an apology for Thomson as a proof that my admirable friend . . . partook also of this infirmity.

But by far the most interesting of these critical writings are those which, written towards the end of Cary's life, remained mere fragments and were printed only in the *Memoir*, as "Notices of Miscellaneous English Poets." The note on Gray is very slight, though it begins well: "He seems to have been present at life rather as a spectator than as an actor." This is a juster if less ingenious observation than Matthew Arnold's supersubtle text, "He never spoke out." The criticism of Sir Walter Scott's poetry shows penetration:

No writer of modern times has combined so much power of imagination with such shrewdness in the observation of human character. . . . He has little skill in moving the more tender passions. What he is chiefly deficient in is that which constitutes the form of poetry, the harmony of numbers. Yet in this, if he seldom gratifies the ear, he scarcely ever offends it, like some of his cotemporaries. If he has not the music of Burns, he is still further removed from the discord of Byron.

This last remark prepares us for the rather too severe estimate of Byron which occupies the longest of these fragments. Cary not unnaturally deplores Byron's dissipations, and was too much scandalised by *Don Juan* to do it justice as a poem. He was annoyed also by the poet's too casual dealings with Dante, and cites the (decidedly unsuccessful) imitation of the famous "squilla di lontana" in *Don Juan* (canto iii, stanza 108) as showing "how insensible Byron was to the charm of a deep and tranquil feeling." Yet he is not uncharitable to Byron as a man:

He unhappily caught an evil contagion from opposite quarters in the turbulent times on which he was cast, and was infected alike by the pride of the aristocrat and [the] coarseness of the republican. Yet his faults were almost overwhelmed by some noble qualities, the total absence of guile, extreme frankness, and an unbounded generosity which at last cost him his life.

A casual remark of Coleridge's recorded here by Cary gives us a glimpse of the personal charm which Byron seems to have exercised upon all who met him : " 'His eyes,' said Mr. Coleridge, 'were like the gates of heaven ; they bewitched one in his favour.' "

Both for their critical and for their personal interest, Cary's few observations on Coleridge himself, whose poetry was far more to his taste than that of Scott or Byron, are worth reproducing in their entirety :

He is superior, I think, to almost all our poets, except Spenser, in the deliciousness of his numbers. This charm results more from melody than measure, from a continuity of sweet sounds than from an apt division or skilful variation of them. There is no appearance of preparation, effort, or artifice ; they rise or fall with his feelings, like the unbidden breathings of an Æolian harp, from the deep intonations of passion to the light skirmishes of fancy.

On the generality of readers it is to be feared this is all so much thrown away. Rapidity of reading hinders attention to it. To enjoy the instrument one had need be in some such happy Castle of Indolence as Thomson has placed it in.

By Lamb, who conversed much with him in his youth, I was told that he *fed* himself on Collins, to whom, in his earlier pieces, he bears much resemblance.

He had little or no observation. What he saw or heard left an impression on him, as it seemed, almost without his own consciousness, and was then taken up and transmuted

into music or beauty by an internal alchemy, or tinted in the ethereal colours of an ever-active imagination.

He judges admirably in the abstract, but was below a common man when he came to compare and decide upon particulars.

Most modern readers are so much more interested in *Christabel* and *The Ancient Mariner* than in Coleridge's earlier poems that the link with Collins escapes them entirely. But it is as well if we are sometimes reminded that the "Romantic Revival" was not really, as the handbooks sometimes suggest, an upheaval which set an impassable gulf between Wordsworth and Coleridge and the poets of the eighteenth century. To a contemporary the unevennesses of the movement were much more salient than to us. Cary yielded to none in his admiration for Coleridge, but that did not prevent him from continuing to admire Gray and Collins, and preferring them to Byron. His preferences, in fact, like those of all save writers of elementary textbooks, went by individuals and not by "schools," real or imaginary.

We may now revert to the *London Magazine* articles. A list of the miscellaneous contributions is given in the *Memoir*,[1] and a few have already been mentioned. Only two or three of the rest call for particular notice. The original pieces, including a couple of historical ballads and a few prose tales rather too learned in atmosphere, are

[1] Vol. ii, p. 73-4. The only omission I have traced is the translation of an ode of Pindar (Jan., 1825), which has already been mentioned. Procter is wrong in attributing to Cary a series of *Additions to Orford's "Royal and Noble Authors"*; and Dr. Toynbee (*Dante in English Literature*, i, pp. 486, 489) prints as Cary's some notes on foreign literature for his authorship of which, as far as I know, there is no evidence. Besides the translation from Valerius Flaccus mentioned in Chap. iv, some of the other minor contributions in verse are reprinted in the *Memoir*, i, pp. 207-212; 332-7; ii, pp. 74-80.

insignificant. Besides these there are a few translations from Latin poetry, and a fair number of reviews of new publications connected with Cary's favourite studies, Latin, French, and Italian literature. Among the French books reviewed it is something of a surprise to find the earliest work of a poet who was to become famous among the new Romantic writers in France. Alphonse de Lamartine's *Premières Méditations Poétiques* appeared in 1820, and Cary's review was in the *London Magazine* for September, 1821. The English scholar's eye for the significant did not fail him when he selected for praise a book since recognised as one of the landmarks in French poetry. The review shows a keen appreciation of the "quiet, peaceful sentiments" in some of the verses, though Cary is severe on the French poet's extravagant apostrophe to Byron as "L'aigle, roi des déserts."

In May, 1823, Cary reviewed, in an article of great interest, Ugo Foscolo's *Essays on Petrarch*, "a book," Cary wrote to his son this year, "that has been some time privately handed about, and has excited a good deal of attention." Foscolo's book, his first independent publication since his arrival in England seven years before, was a notable contribution to Anglo-Italian studies, and the first adequate criticism in English of a poet who, though better known here than Dante, had not hitherto been well understood. Cary's review, which is very friendly in tone, repays in some measure Foscolo's praise of the Dante in the *Edinburgh Review* article of 1818. He gives a cordial welcome to the Italian critic's penetrating studies of Petrarch the man and the poet, and in commenting on the section containing a "Parallel between Dante and Petrarch," he makes some interesting observations on the problem of translating the two poets, which may help to explain why very little

of Petrarch has ever been successfully rendered into English :

There is no comparison in the nicety required in transferring Petrarch's poems or those of Dante into another language. The graces of Petrarch are subtle and evanescent : the beauties of Dante defined and palpable. Through the numbers of Petrarch there floats a sweet and brilliant music. His ear seems as if it were always bending over the strings, at once to modulate and imbibe the sounds. Dante, with his head erect, makes the tones wait on the unequal current of his own feelings ; and they are accordingly sometimes gentle and mellifluous, at others, impetuous, or austere and rugged.

At the beginning of his article Cary notes with evident satisfaction the recent progress in this country in the study of Italian literature : we are not surprised to find him tracing it back to his beloved Gray :

There is much in this volume to gratify the lovers of Italian poetry. That the number of these has, of late years, much increased among us, may be regarded as no unfavourable symptom. It is a sign that we are so far willing to revert to the golden ages of our literature. The first among the moderns, who led us back to this source at which our elder poets had drunk in so much of their inspiration, was Gray. When in his company, a young man at Cambridge happened to make an apposite quotation from Dante, Gray suddenly turned round to him, and said, " Right ; but have you read Dante, Sir ? " On the young man's modestly answering that " he had endeavoured to understand him," Gray addressed the chief of his discourse to him for the remainder of that evening, next invited him to his rooms, and soon became the director of his studies, as he continued

ever after to be his friend.[1] For one in whom this predilection was equally strong, we must go back as far as Milton.

In this connection we may mention the rather more detailed statement in the life of Hayley, published in the magazine in November, 1824. Here Cary attributes the "decisive impulse" in the revival of interest in Italian poetry to Hayley: "Gray, Hurd, and the two Wartons had done something towards awakening it, but the spell was completed by him." Except for the rather undeserved credit given to Bishop Hurd for his timid defence of Italian poetry (in *Letters on Chivalry and Romance*, 1762), this is true enough as far as it goes. But we have seen in tracing the history of Cary's Dante that the extension of this revived interest from a very few scholars to the public in general was left to workers later than Hayley.

In approaching Cary's translations from Greek the present writer must be content to imitate Dr. Johnson's candour on a similar occasion, and confess his inability to "speak as a critick." Yet perhaps some remarks may be hazarded by way of indicating the relations between Cary's and other versions. His translation of the *Birds* of Aristophanes was the first attempt at a metrical rendering in English, and like the Dante was addressed in some measure both to the scholar (there are full and learned notes) and to the general reader ignorant of Greek. In both functions, however, Cary's book has been superseded. On the one hand there came later scholarly editions, more elaborate and necessarily more authoritative, like those of B. H. Kennedy (1874) and Mr. B. B. Rogers (1906); on the other

[1] The anecdote is from T. J. Mathias's *Memoir of the Rev. Norton Nicholls* (1809), who is the "young man" to whom Cary refers (cf. *Dante in English Literature*, i, pp. 560, 677).

came the purely popular version, one of a number by John Hookham Frere, who did for Aristophanes what Cary had done for Dante. Frere had been working on the Greek dramatist since 1820 at least, but he had the advantage of seeing Cary's *Birds* before completing (about 1828) his own version, which was not printed until 1839. Frere thought highly of Cary's translation, though it did not completely satisfy him: "It is much better than Mitchell's translations" [in prose, 1821-2], he wrote in October, 1834; continuing however: "mais ce n'est pas encore la bonne. Nobody has yet seen the true character of Peisthetairus." [1]

As he notes in his preface, Cary did not attempt to reproduce exactly the varied metres of the original. Like Frere, he gives most of the dialogue in easy blank verse, occasionally substituting rhymed couplets; and for the choruses he uses various standard English measures. For the great Parabasis (the chorus of the birds) the most famous lines in the play, Cary chose what he admitted was "an insufficient representative," the seven-foot iambic couplet or "fourteener," as he found it in our Elizabethan poets. His objection to the anapæstic measure of the original was that in English it is "very unwieldy"; and though he would have been the first to praise Swinburne's remarkable version of the Parabasis in the metre of the Greek, many readers will feel that even the most ingenious prosodist in English has not quite avoided this difficulty[2]. Cary's Parabasis is at least flowing and thoroughly poetic, as a few lines will show:

[1] Memoir of Frere, in *Works*, ed. W. E. and Sir Bartle Frere (1872), vol. i, p. clxxxv. In a note to his own version, Frere says of a highly technical passage which he purposely omits: "Whoever wishes to see how well it can be executed, may be referred to Mr. Cary's translation."

[2] Swinburne's rendering appeared in his *Studies in Song* (1880).

Oh come ye men, ye brittle things, mere images of clay,
Ye flitting leaves, ye shadowy shapes, ye creatures of a day,
Poor, wingless, wretched mortals ye, like nothing but a dream ;
Give heed to us, and list for once to an immortal theme.
Immortals we, and live for aye, from age and sorrow free ;
Our mansion in the viewless air ; our thoughts, eternity.
Come learn from us, for we can tell ye secrets most sublime,
How all things are, and birds exist before the birth of time ;
How Gods and Hell and Chaos rose, and mighty rivers sprang ;
Come learn aright ;—and then from me bid Prodicus go hang.

Frere's version of these lines is spirited, but a little too tinkling and overloaded with rhymes. In general Cary excels on the purely poetic side, Frere in interpreting the rollicking humour and subtle characterisation of the play. In the purely comic passages Cary's manner is too sedate, and reads tamely beside the gay familiarity of Frere. True to his usual practice, Cary introduces (though sparingly) archaisms from the English of Shakespeare's age ; while Frere, like his recent successor, Mr. Rogers, creates a much more modern atmosphere, not in the least like that of Elizabethan comedy—we are reminded in fact rather of Gilbert and Sullivan. Which of these methods is better fitted to convey to an English reader the characteristic humour of Aristophanes we must leave the professors to determine.

CHAPTER 7. THE BRITISH MUSEUM: CARY AND LAMB (1825—1834)

In dealing with the *London Magazine* we have perhaps lost sight for the moment of Cary's domestic affairs; but family events were few and unexciting between the visit to France in 1821 and the abandonment of journalistic work in 1825. In 1824 had died an old friend, Wilkes, who left the rectorship of Enville to devolve on his relative Price, Cary's brother-in-law. It was a rich living, and Price's good fortune was not without some slight effect upon the prosperity of the Cary family as a whole. Nevertheless, Cary could not afford to drop the profits of journalism without looking about for some suitable substitute. During 1825, a leisure year, he reverted to his old habit of voracious reading, and the Literary Journal temporarily reassumes its original proportions; but in the autumn he made a definite move towards seeking a fresh source of income.

We need not dwell at length on the varying fortunes of Cary's applications for a post in the British Museum. They dragged on for more than six months, during which he was kept busy canvassing for support. Three bishops, including his old Oxford friend Howley, now Bishop of London, two or three peers, and a large number of less eminent persons joined in recommending Cary to the Archbishop of Canterbury, Manners Sutton, who as the chief trustee had the main voice in making appointments. The office for which Cary first applied, that of Keeper of the Antiquities,

was not very well suited to his abilities; moreover, the expected vacancy could not be declared during the lifetime of the actual holder of the office, a Mr. Coombe, who was slowly sinking under an incurable disease, but proved to be an unconscionable long time a-dying. Fortunately for Cary the holder of another office, a Mr. Bean, "a most respectable old clergyman" (as Cary describes him), died in the spring of 1826, while the former appointment was still pending. This left a vacancy for an Assistant-Keeper of the Printed Books, and among a number of candidates for this post Cary was the lucky one. On June 12, 1826, he began his attendance at the Museum as Assistant-Keeper, or in non-technical language as an assistant librarian.

The British Museum in 1826 was not the imposing institution which we know to-day; the Manuscript and Printed Book departments, especially, did not then compare favourably with some of the great continental libraries. A fair start had, indeed, been made during the eighteenth century, and a large number of books and manuscripts had been obtained by the acquisition of private collections, from those of Sir Robert Cotton and Sir Hans Sloane, which were made the nucleus of the library in 1753, to the eighty thousand volumes belonging to King George III, which in 1823 (in circumstances of which perhaps the less said the better) were added to the national store by his successor. But adequate provision had not yet been made for the upkeep and growth of a great library. The Exchequer grants were far too small to permit of sufficient additions being made by purchase, and the deliveries under copyright regulations were evaded wholesale until after the Act of 1842. The accommodation for the storing of books and for reading rooms was also unduly limited. At the same time it must be admitted that if the library was deficient

and badly organised, the number of persons who showed a desire to make use of it was at first very small. It was not until 1817 that the inadequate provision for readers even began to cause inconvenience.

In fact, the idea of a great national library was at this period still in its infancy. Apart from Oxford and Cambridge, the eighteenth century was the age of large private collections—the age of the Harleys, the Arundels, and the Sloanes ; and until well after the accession of Queen Victoria few scholars had the imagination to look forward to a national collection which should contain not merely a number of rarities, but the largest possible quantity of ordinary works, ancient and modern, obscure and famous alike. Many obstacles had to be surmounted before this conception could gain the recognition of Parliament and the nation.

The period of Cary's work at the Museum, from 1826 to 1837, was one of transition. Little attempt at reform had been made during the first quarter of the century, but at least there had been no actual decline ; and towards the close of Cary's life the old ideas of *laisser faire*, here as elsewhere, began slowly and unwillingly to give place to those of radical reorganisation. Some of these changes will require attention later on in considering Cary's relations with a later arrival at the Museum, Antonio Panizzi.

The Museum buildings have long since been transformed from what they were in Cary's day ; but a younger colleague, Richard Cowtan, has left us an account of the Museum as Cary knew it, which is marked by a pleasing particularity. The main building was Montague House, originally a large private mansion dating from the Queen Anne period ; to this various additions had been made more recently, including the Royal or King's Library which housed the collection of George III :

Some of my readers will recollect [wrote Cowtan in 1872 in his *Memories of the British Museum*] the high red-brick wall that faced Great Russell Street, with its quaint frenchified old-fashioned Lodge, guarded by two tall grenadiers. The entrance was through high folding wooden gates, with a smaller door in the centre for visitors on foot. This smaller door was at the time I am writing of, 1835, opened by a porter, whose good-humoured round face beams upon me even now, and whom I always thought a good embodiment of an Englishman, and a fitting introduction to the British Museum. . . .

On passing through the gates, a spacious quadrangle presented itself with an Ionic colonnade on the street side, and Montague House faced the visitor. The exterior of the main building was not such as to command admiration, and was built of red brick with stone dressings. . . .

The two low-built wings on either side of Montague House were appropriated as residences for the officers and domestic servants of the establishment. It was in one of these on the right hand side that the Rev. H. F. Cary, one of the librarians, resided.

The interior of the main building is described no less exactly. Crossing a neatly gravelled courtyard and ascending a steep flight of steps, the visitor entered the hall. Here the most striking objects were the Roubiliac Shakespeare, an elegant statue of "the Hon. Anne Seymour Damer [sculptress and friend of Horace Walpole], holding in her hands a small figure of the Genius of the Thames," a Burmese idol, and a badly stuffed hippopotamus. Then there were the two giraffes on the upper staircase. "Few that saw them will forget the giraffes," says the candid Cowtan; "they looked so stiff and rigid as to have given one an idea that they died under the influence of strychnia, or were the original pair that were preserved in Noah's Ark." Most of these

treasures vanished with the transference of the Natural History section to South Kensington in 1881.

The library of printed books occupied the ground floor, while upstairs, besides the giraffes, were medals, manuscripts, and other exhibits. The Reading Room was in the new East Wing, near the King's Library, and adjoining Cary's apartments.

The officers in charge of this repository of learning and curiosities included several eminent scholars. The director of the whole institution (traditionally called "Head Librarian") was Joseph Planta, who was succeeded, a year after Cary joined the staff, by Sir Henry Ellis, the antiquarian. Cary's immediate superior was the Rev. H. H. Baber, Keeper of the Printed Books; and a Mr. Walter, who had been one of George III's librarians, was the second assistant in the same department: in 1831 he was succeeded by Panizzi. The Keeper of the Manuscripts was the Rev. J. Forshall; his assistant (and successor) was Mr. (afterwards Sir) F. Madden, the well-known editor of early English manuscripts. Some half-dozen others had charge of the departments of Natural History, Botany and Antiquities.

Cary's appointment was at a salary of £350 (which remained the same as late as 1835 at least), with apartments for himself and his family rent free. For a younger man the post would have been not without attractions, but Cary's age and scholarship were worthy of something better; and in carrying out his dull and arduous duties for over eleven years it was his poverty rather than his will which consented. His old acquaintance Landor wrote some verses[1] about this time which form an appropriate comment on the situation:

[1] Printed in *Heroic Idyls, with additional Poems* (1863). Landor like many others misspells "Carey."

TO CARY

On His Appointment to a Low Office in the British Museum.

Cary ! I fear the fruits are scanty
Thou gatherest from the fields of Dante,
But thou hast found at least a shed
Wherein to cram thy truckle-bed ;
The porter's lodge of the Museum
May daily hear thee sing *Te Deum.*

Peaches and grapes are mostly found
Richest the nearest to the ground :
Our gardeners take especial care
To keep down low all boughs that bear.
Dante's long labyrinthine line
Is straiten'd and drawn tight by thine :
Hell, devil, dog, in force remain,
And Paradise blooms fresh again.

In 1860, a year or two before he first printed these verses, Landor wrote to a friend : "Cary was a learned and virtuous man. Our ministers of state were never more consistent than in their neglect of him. One would imagine that they were all poets, only that they did not snarl or scowl at him."

Whether, as his verses suggest, Landor had heard at his distant retreat near Florence of the housing problem at the Museum as it affected Cary, we do not know ; at any rate, the new Assistant-Keeper's first year was one of considerable discomfort. The accommodation was so limited that for several months there was no room for the Cary family at all ; and Cary had to travel daily by coach between Chiswick and Bloomsbury, contriving, philosophically

enough, to continue his translation of Pindar, a few lines a day, during the journey. Even when, in November, 1826, they removed "bag and baggage" from the old Chiswick parsonage, the quarters assigned them were far from palatial. In his letter to Price announcing the move (November 5, 1826), Cary invites his sister to pay a visit to London, but is unable to offer her a room in the Museum :

A lodging is usually to be had very near to this place, and the days, till bedtime, may be past here, if she will put up with such accommodation as we have,—one sitting-room, and a bed-room only to retire to between dinner and tea.

In the same letter he adds : "One of our servants sleeps on a little landing-place, half way up the highest flight of stairs, and the other, who is a male, out of the walls." Fortunately by the following spring two new rooms were built adjoining Cary's quarters, and henceforth he was able at least to entertain his friends in tolerable comfort.

The details of Cary's routine duties at the Museum need not detain us long. He had, of course, given up his Chiswick curacy ; but as he had only to attend five days a week at the library he was able to continue his Sunday services at the Savoy Chapel. In the Museum he shared with Baber and Walter the duties of superintending the care of the books, seeking out and recommending suitable works for purchase, assisting readers, and occasionally showing visitors round the library or even the whole Museum. It was also Cary's particular province to supervise the acquisition of foreign books and periodicals ; but the greater part of his time was occupied in the uninspiring task of compiling and writing out the "Poetry" section in the new manuscript "Classed Catalogue of Printed Books." This expensive and ill-starred undertaking, which had been begun in 1824, was

planned on the principle of cataloguing by subjects, a system now recognised as of little use in the absence of a complete catalogue by authors. But this, now a commonplace of librarianship, had not yet been realised, and it was only after ten years of wasted labour that the project was abandoned. The author-catalogue was not begun until after Cary's retirement, and the story of its long and chequered career, in manuscript and in print, belongs to later generations.[1]

Throughout his stay at the Museum Cary performed his duties to the full satisfaction of his superiors, and was universally popular among the staff. Yet in spite of the estimation in which he was held both within and without the Museum walls, he no longer enjoyed the energy and vigour of his full maturity, and he found the work fatiguing and irksome. Cary was the last man in the world to be envious, but he could not help feeling the contrast between his own situation and that of Charles Lamb, who had "left the d—d India House for ever" in 1825, with a pension of over £400 and endless leisure which, for a time at least, he keenly enjoyed. In a letter to Clare in 1830, Cary joins with the poet in lamenting, only half humorously, the advent of "this grand Age of Utility," when the "idle fancies of a poet" are little esteemed :

No matter [he continues philosophically] : if it is so, we must swim with the stream. You can employ yourself in cultivating your cabbages, and in handling the hay-fork ; and I, not quite so pleasantly, in making catalogues of books. We will not be out of the fashion ; but show ourselves as useful as the rest of the world. In the meantime we may

[1] A useful sketch of the history of the British Museum catalogue appeared in the *Quarterly Review*, Oct., 1898 (vol. 188, p. 289), when the printed catalogue was nearing completion. See also several papers in Dr. Richard Garnett's *Essays in Librarianship* (1899).

smile at what is going forward ; entertain ourselves with our own whims in private ; and expect that the tide some day may turn.

Official duties, unfortunately, left little time for "private whims." The record of Cary's reading ceases entirely in 1827, and when the third edition of the Dante was called for in 1831 he was obliged, for want of leisure, to reprint the edition of 1819 without revision. He managed at last to finish his translation of Pindar, but this, sadly to its detriment, had to appear a mere naked text, bare and unadorned : "Pindar sadly wants Preface and notes," Lamb wrote to Moxon, the publisher.

Life, however, was not all cataloguing ; there were compensations. The new headquarters, though less spacious, were more conveniently situated than the Chiswick parsonage, for Cary's son Henry was now reading for the Bar, while Francis was a student at Sass's Art Academy, almost within a stone's throw of the Museum. Meetings with literary friends could also now be much more frequent, and scarcely a day passed without bringing its visitor. Edwards, another junior colleague, tells us :

The homely rooms in the Court-yard of the Museum allotted to the Assistant-Keeper of the Printed Book Department were soon the habitual resort of a cluster of poets. The faces of Coleridge, Rogers, Charles Lamb, and (during their occasional visits to London) those of Southey and of Wordsworth, became, in those days, very familiar at the gate of old Montague House.

Perhaps the most frequent visitor, particularly during Cary's first year or two at the Museum, was Charles Lamb, who became well known to the jolly-looking porter whom Cowtan describes. As he passed through the gate Lamb

would say, "in a light but peremptory air, 'I am going to Mr. Cary's.'" Sometimes with him, sometimes by themselves, would come many common friends—eminent poets like Wordsworth, Southey, and Coleridge; worthy scholars like Crowe and George Dyer; or "old friends of the *London*" like Procter, Talfourd, and Darley. Later came younger associates like Moxon and John Forster, the biographer of Landor and of Dickens.

Among the older men Rogers, the enthusiastic book-collector, came often to consult Cary on some early Italian treasure or to lend or borrow books. Now and then he brought with him Tom Moore or Crowe, but more often he joined Lamb at Cary's table. Once they dined there with the artist Stothard ("that dear old man," as Lamb calls him), who was doing some of the illustrations for Rogers's sumptuous *Poems* of 1833. Stothard was nearly stone-deaf; but he managed, says Lamb, "to enjoy all that was going on in mirth with the company."

Southey, whom Cary had known slightly at Oxford (no doubt Lamb brought them together again) dined once or twice at the Assistant-Keeper's house; but he was not a very comfortable guest. Procter tells us of one occasion when the old intolerance, which was Southey's only serious fault, broke out again: "Once at dinner at the Rev. Mr. Cary's he spoke with extreme energy on political matters; singling out the demerits of some writers and reformers in a very pointed way. . . This Cadmean hostility, bearing upon the friends of some of the party then present, in some measure disturbed the conviviality of the meeting."

Southey, Wordsworth, and in some degree Coleridge, were "alarmists" on political questions, as Crabb Robinson puts it in the privacy of his diary. Their apprehensions (rising with Southey almost to terror) at the passing of the

Reform Bill of 1832 seem a little exaggerated to a later age accustomed to adult suffrage and Clydeside Members of Parliament. Cary was strongly in favour of the Bill; but when any of these three was at his table he took care to avoid the perilous topic as far as possible, and generally managed to maintain harmony. Yet with Coleridge, the most frequent visitor of the three, differences were sometimes keen enough. We get a glimpse of one of these disagreements in a letter from Coleridge, written on April 22, 1832, while the storm over the threatened creation of peers to pass the Bill was at its height. The burning question comes out at the beginning and end of the letter; it opens thus:

My dear friend,—For I am sure by my love for you that you love me too well to have suffered my very rude and uncourteous vehemence of contradiction and reclamation respecting your advocacy of the Catilinarian Reform Bill, when we were last together, to have cooled, much less alienated, your kindness. . . .

And here is the characteristic Coleridgian subscription:

Your, with unalterable, as ever unaltered love and regard, and in all (but as to the accursed Reform Bill, that *mendacium ingens* on its own preamble—to which no human being can be more friendly than I am—that huge tapeworm *lie*, of some threescore and ten joints) entire sympathy of heart and soul, your affectionate

S. T. COLERIDGE.

The "tapeworm lie" became the law of the land within a month, but the country survived it, and so did the friendship between Coleridge and Cary.

There is not a great deal to be said of Coleridge during these years, though the intimacy with Cary remained to the end as close as ever. Up to 1830, when his health

began to grow steadily worse, he frequently made the short journey from Highgate to Bloomsbury to confer on some topic of political or theological interest, or to bespeak assistance in one or other of the literary projects so few of which were ever to be carried out. There was also a voluminous correspondence between the friends, the size and frequency of which is indicated by a humorous aside in Coleridge's letter of June, 1827 :

(By the bye, it would be but civil in the Government to let all communications to the librarians of the Imperial British Museum come free as presumably concerning the artistical, bell-lettristical (not belly) or bibliographical interests of the nation.)

Almost the whole of this correspondence has vanished. We cannot but agree with Henry Cary in regretting the total disappearance of his father's letters to Coleridge : " the contrast," he well says, " between the glowing dreams of the metaphysician and the simple, unadorned plain-speaking of the scholar, when commenting on, or answering, the high flights of Coleridge, could not have failed to give an interesting picture of the mind of each." Of Coleridge's letters belonging to this period four have survived, printed in the *Memoir* of Cary. If, as is probable, they are typical specimens, we have not missed very much by the loss of the rest of the correspondence on this side. Coleridge did not shine as a letter-writer. He seldom troubled to express himself clearly and at reasonable length ; and in later years especially, most of his letters have the perplexing discursiveness of his conversational monologues, with but little of that personal charm which held his actual hearers spellbound.

The two letters to Cary belonging to 1827 consist almost entirely of rambling theological arguments, and are without

interest for our purpose. The later pair are briefer and their subject-matter is a little more promising. In both Cary appears as literary adviser to his friend. The first (November, 1830) asks him to point out obscurities of style in Coleridge's little book *On the Constitution of the Church and State*, then recently published. In the second, the last surviving letter, besides the political allusions which have already been quoted, we hear of another literary project, and get a glimpse of the poet's final agonised struggle with the opium habit :

I hope that the fearful night-storm is subsiding—as you will have heard from Mr. Green or dear Charles Lamb. I write now to say that if God, who in his fatherly compassion, and through the love wherewith he hath beheld and loved me in Christ, in whom alone he can love the world, hath worked almost a miracle of grace in and for me by a sudden emancipation from a thirty-three years' fearful slavery, if God's goodness should come home and so far perfect my convalescence, as that I should be capable of resuming my literary labours, I have a thought, by way of a light *prelude* —a sort of brush-softening of my long-dormant joints and muscles—to give a reprint, as nearly as possible, except in quality of the *paper*, a facsimile of John Asgill's tracts, with a Life and copious notes. . . . Now can you direct me to any sources of information respecting John Asgill, a prince darling of mine ?

Truly hope springs eternal ; but John Asgill, that queer forensic theologian, was not to find his biographer in his greatest admirer. Only a few of the notes ever saw the light ; and little more than two years after this letter was written, Charles Lamb was wandering about half stupefied, breaking now and then into his friends' talk with the exclamation, " Coleridge is dead ! "

There are some melancholy passages too in the story of Cary and Lamb, especially towards the end ; but in the life as in the writings of Lamb, laughter and tears are never far from one another, and for a few years at least after his emancipation from " the den in Leadenhall Street " things went on the whole pretty well. After nearly eighteen months of walking, reading, and pleasant idleness, with a little writing, Lamb began to feel the need of some regular occupation ; and so in September, 1826, he began reading daily at the British Museum the great collection of early English plays which had been presented by Garrick. His copious selections from these plays, made on the lines of the earlier volume of 1808, appeared in instalments during 1827 in William Hone's *Table Book*. Cary, who perhaps suggested this pleasant and useful task, must have seen his friend almost every day during the winter and spring ; and as soon as he was settled in his Museum quarters (in November, 1826), he no doubt frequently invited Lamb to spend the evening there after his day's reading. It was probably in February or March, 1827, that, partly as a result of Lamb's visits to the Museum Reading Room, he and Cary began to improve their acquaintance with George Darley, an old " Londoner " of whom they had as yet seen very little.

Darley, " mathematician, considerable actually, and also poet," as Carlyle later described him, had graduated in 1820 at Dublin, and soon after came over to London full of literary ambitions. He wrote a good deal, both in prose and verse, in the *London* under Taylor and Hessey, but as we have seen, he was not really well known to any of the contributors until later on. Beddoes, that queer and strangely detached genius, met him in April, 1824, at Mrs. Shelley's house, and sent to his friend Kelsall a brief but vivid description of the young Irishman :

Darley is a tallish, slender, pale, lighteyebrowed, gentle-looking baldpate, in a brown surtout with a duodecimo under his arm—stammering to a most provoking degree, so much so as to be almost inconversible.

Darley's impediment of speech was much worse than Lamb's, and he was (not very surprisingly) shyer even than Cary; these drawbacks proved a serious obstacle to the literary success for which he strove with almost morbid anxiety. In later years, after Lamb's death, Cary and his family were almost the only friends with whom Darley could bring himself to remain in personal contact ; with others, Procter and Miss Mitford in particular, he communicated chiefly by means of voluminous correspondence. In curious contrast with his undoubted amiability in personal intercourse and the gentle gracefulness of his poetry, was the extreme severity of his critical writings in the *London* over the signature " John Lacy " ; the uncompromising tone of his *Letters to the Dramatists of the Day* drew from Beddoes the appellation of " Ajax Flagellifer, the bloody John Lacy." This rash policy, which Darley continued in later years, had much to do with his failure to capture the public ear with his poetry.

The growth of Darley's intimacy with Cary, and through him with Lamb, can now be clearly traced in the young poet's first letter to Cary. Early in 1827 Darley as well as Lamb was reading at the British Museum, and Cary, after a few conversations there with the shy poet, in which the ice was broken, had the happy thought of inviting him to meet Lamb and other friends at dinner. This was Darley's reply :

[*Endorsed by Cary:* 1827.]

5, Up. Eaton St.,
Grosvenor Place,
Saty. 10-27. [*Feb.* 10 *or March* 10, 1827.[1]]

My dear Sir,—I will have great pleasure in going to you on Monday next and meeting old associates of the London —Especially Charles Lamb to whom I have a thousand apologies to make (if I knew how) for my uncivil behaviour to him in your Reading Room. I have sat *beside* him, and looked *over* him twenty times, yet never could prevail upon myself to recognise him. This is another of my "unaccountable aversions,"—to speak *first.*

Here is a leaf or two from my *Capriccia*—the Masque I spoke of. You will perhaps see it is founded on *Lilian of the Vale*—but I have despiritualised her, and made her merely as ethereal a creature as I could make of clay. The story itself was in fact well enough—and I did not like to spoil it by dramatising. But the *Scene* was capable of a new set of actors—besides that there was a necessity for human interest in a dramatic piece, which I could not well manage without making her simply a woman.

I did not mean that Mathematics *inspired* poetry but only that the Science was absolutely necessary for such an extravagates as *I* am. Only for this cooling Study I should be out of my reason probably—like poor Lee's hero "knock out all the start" and die like a mad dog foaming.

Yours, my dear Sir,
Very truly,
George Darley.

The "masque" is *Sylvia, or the May Queen: A Lyrical*

[1] We may assume one of these dates is correct; both were Saturdays. The 10 must be the day of the week and not the month, for by October *Sylvia* had been published. Moreover, Darley clearly implies that he had sat beside Lamb quite recently, and Lamb had finished his Museum work by the summer of 1827. Finally, early in 1827 for this letter fits in excellently with later events in the year.

Drama, published in the autumn of this year. Its plot was, as Darley says here, derived from one of his own prose tales. *Lilian of the Vale*, which had appeared in the *London Magazine*, is a little pastoral romance not unlike Lamb's early work, *Rosamund Gray*; it contains the sole lyric by Darley which became popular, the song "I've been roaming." Lamb and Cary both thought well of Darley's poetry, particularly *Sylvia*. Lamb said it was "a very poetical poem"; and the novel idea of giving the stage-directions entirely in verse appealed to his love for the whimsical. Cary told Miss Mitford in 1836 that he rated *Sylvia* "more highly than any poem of the present day."

Darley's mathematics did more than steady his nerves; they brought in more money than his verses ever earned. At this time he was writing for Taylor a series of popular textbooks, and this kept him closely in touch with the former owners of the *London*. In July of this year we find him dining at Taylor's with "a few old friends," among whom was Cary, as Taylor wrote to Clare on the 5th. In the autumn Darley stood for the Professorship of English Literature in the newly-founded University of London, and Lamb and Cary joined in giving him their hearty support. A letter from Taylor to Clare (November 20) is again our informant:

> What success he is likely to meet with no one can tell. His little work of Sylvia may assist, and ought to be of service to him—but all Public Bodies are capricious, and he is comparatively unknown as an Author, much as he has written. In the meantime he has received very handsome letters from Charles Lamb and our friend Cary, which he will exhibit to the Council as Testimonials of the opinion which some men of acknowledged Genius entertain of him.

Unluckily neither of these testimonials is forthcoming. In

view of Darley's impediment of speech it is not very surprising that he failed to obtain the appointment.

Some time during the same year (probably in the summer) we get an amusing glimpse of Cary at the Lambs' house. On finishing with the Garrick plays Lamb had found another useful occupation in teaching Latin to his adopted daughter, Emma Isola, in order to qualify her to earn her living as a governess. Lamb was not much of a disciplinarian, and progress was slow : "'Tis like feeding a child with chopped hay from a spoon," he tells Mrs. Shelley ; "Sisyphus his labours were as nothing to it." Cary, calling in casually, found them translating into Latin some sentences of a style rather forceful than elegant, and laughed heartily at their rendering of "Blast you" as "Deus afflet tibi." "How some parsons would have goggled and what would Hannah More say ?" Lamb wrote to a friend in telling the story. Cary and Darley were both, of course, among the galaxy of poets who were called upon to contribute to Miss Isola's album, which was begun in 1827. Ultimately Emma got a post as governess, but a few years later she married Moxon, the publisher.

During 1828 we find Cary and Darley among the visitors at Enfield, whither the Lambs had moved from Islington in the previous September. Their new home, though not externally attractive (it was a "gambogy-looking cottage"), was compact and comfortable, and the district was quiet and healthy—one chief reason for the move ; but the distance from friends was a disadvantage, and Lamb soon began to feel his separation from the amusements of London. The early months at Enfield, also, were saddened by a recurrence of Mary Lamb's old illness, which lasted from their arrival almost till Christmas, and left her very weak all through the winter. And so it was not (apparently)

until early in April, 1828, that Cary, in company with Darley and Allan Cunningham, paid his first visit to Chase Side, Enfield. A letter from Lamb to Cary (pretty certainly of this date[1]) invites these three "old chums of the London" to "gladden our cell":

> You shall have hermit's fare [Lamb continues], with talk as seraphical as the novelty of the divine life will permit, with an innocent retrospect to the world which we have left, when I will thank you for your hospitable offer at Chiswick, and with plain hermit reasons evince the necessity of abiding here.

Cary's "hospitable offer at Chiswick" is a little puzzling, but I think it may mean that he had invited Lamb and his sister to make use of his old Chiswick house (which remained in his possession) as an occasional summer or holiday resort. Cary and his sons certainly used it for such purposes when it was not let,[2] and the offer to Lamb may have been made actually "at Chiswick," some time in 1827, when Cary was spending a week or two in his former home and had asked Lamb down for the day.

Lamb's next letter to Cary, only two months later (June 10, 1828), is of more importance. It gives us a glimpse of Wordsworth (who was in London *en route* for a tour up the

[1] This letter is dated by all editors April 3, 1826, but all the evidence is against this date, which must I think have arisen from a misreading of the original postmark. There is no other evidence for the Lambs being at Enfield in 1826; Lamb's postscript says "Oh, for a Museum in the wilderness!" and Cary had not even been appointed to the Museum in April, 1826; several phrases imply that Lamb was writing after settling at Enfield in September, 1827; finally the familiar mention of Darley, compared with his letter to Cary already given, makes 1826 impossible and 1827 excessively improbable. I have, therefore, adopted April 3, 1828, as a date which fits in very well with Lamb's other letters of that year.

[2] Cf. *Memoir*, ii, p. 170; but Cary did not sell the house until 1833, according to Austin Dobson (*William Hogarth*, 1907, p. 143 note).

Rhine with his daughter and Coleridge) at Cary's house ; and it shows also the difficulty Lamb was finding in controlling his weakness for drink. Cary had invited him to meet Wordsworth at dinner, but the letter sends a regretful refusal : " it would be at the expence of health and comfort my infirmities cannot afford " :

Now let me beg [he continues] that we may meet here with assured safety to both sides. Darley and Procter come here on Sunday morning ; pray arrange to come along with them. Here I can be tolerably moderate. In town, the very air of town turns my head and is intoxication enough, if intoxication knew a limit. I am a poor country mouse, and your cates disturb me.[1]

The letter ends with such cordial importunities that we may be fairly certain that Cary joined Darley and Procter ; but as this instance suggests, it was becoming difficult, with Lamb's increasing fear of " the wicked town " and Cary's hard work at the Museum, to arrange meetings. In consequence the friends appear to have seen less of each other during the next few years. We have record of only two meetings between Lamb and Cary in 1829, and one in 1830. Of the former we learn from Cary's letter to Clare (April 13, 1830) answering his enquiries after Wainewright and Lamb, whom Clare had not seen since 1824 :

I have not seen either Lamb or Wainewright since last summer, when the former spent one day with me here [at the Museum], and another day we all three met at the house of the latter, who now resides in a place he has inherited from a relation at Turnham Green. Lamb is settled at Endfield, about seven miles from London, with his sister, who I fear is in a very indifferent state of health, so that his friends see very little of him. When I meet either one or

[1] Ainger (1904, vol. ii, p. 203).

other of our old companions, whom I regard as much as you do, I will not fail to acquaint him with your anxious enquiries.

The meeting at Linden House, Turnham Green, was probably the last either Lamb or Cary saw of the queerest of the "Londoners"; for not long after this Wainewright found that England was becoming too hot to hold him.

Only a month after writing this letter to Clare, on May 11, 1830, Cary entertained Lamb and Rogers to dinner at the Museum, as we learn from Lamb's letter to Moxon next day, asking him to call on Cary: "I told him of all Rogers's handsome behaviour to you, and you are already no stranger. Go." One of Rogers's many generous actions was his lending Moxon £500 to start a publishing business.

Of Darley as well as of Lamb we hear little during 1829 and 1830, but probably for a different reason. Darley was living quite near Cary, and was frequently working in the Museum Reading Room; the friends therefore met so often that letters became unnecessary. One or two casual scraps which survive suffice to show the growth of their intimacy. A note from Darley which probably belongs here is written "Apud Superos," that is, in the Reading Room on the upper floor of the Museum. It asks Cary to read an ode: "I want—praises if I can get them to be sure—but opinions at any rate." A second note, also written in the Reading Room and sent by hand, dates pretty certainly from May, 1830, and is in the form of a comic address in verse. Like some of Darley's later notes, this reveals the playful side of his nature in an attractive manner. The interest of this unfamiliar aspect of the friendship (which is severely repressed in the *Memoir* of Cary) may serve as an excuse for preserving verses which Darley certainly did not intend for publication:

ODE TO A CERTAIN LIBRARIAN.

[*Date probably May* 15, 1830 : *endorsed by Cary :*
G. Darley, after April, 1830.[1]]

Reverendissimo Translator of the Inferno,
From this poetical Epistle, you may possibly, by some means
or other, hook or crook, contrive to learn-O,
That I (Deep dweller of the Musean Purgatorio !)
Am in the second story-O.

Tell me, O tell me, Sage Anglifier of the Paradiso !
Will there be, at four o'clock to-day, anything on your
table, in the inviting shape of bread-&-cheese O ?
Or, haply, a stray potato,
To be ate-O ?

If that there will, (Grave Sir !) pray favor me with a
line-O,
And I, perchance, may condescend to dine-O,
Crack jokes and make me merry
With you and Mrs. Cary ;
As of old
We are told
Great Jupiter, King of Gods, came down from Heaven, to
cram his eternal *fauces*,
At the expence of that most hospitable Couple, Philemon
and good Baucis !

May fifteen. In Reading-Room.
I wait
The fate
That you shall doom :
Whether I am to get my dinner,
Or fast like a poetic sinner. G. D.

[1] No doubt this refers to some rearrangement in the reading accommodation at the Museum, recalled to Cary's memory by Darley's words " in the second story-O," i.e., in the Reading Room upstairs ; there were several such changes during Cary's stay at the Museum. Darley was out of England for several years from August or September, 1830, which fixes the date of this note with little possibility of error.

In the autumn of this year Darley, erratic as ever, gave all his London friends the slip and vanished to wander for several years on the Continent: "his departure was so sudden," Taylor's partner Hessey wrote to Clare on September 15, "that he did not take leave even of Taylor but by a letter which he left behind him." Darley spent most of his time in the great picture galleries of France, Italy, and the Netherlands. He had joined the staff of the newly-founded *Athenæum* (for which Lamb and Procter also wrote), and from abroad he sent articles on the early painters of Europe, which added greatly to his reputation as a critic. Otherwise neither Lamb nor Cary seems to have heard much of him during the next year or two; but in 1833 Cary met him in Italy.

Lamb, as Cary's letter to Clare in 1830 indicates, was having a hard time of it at this period, for his sister's illnesses were growing more frequent and lasting longer at each recurrence, and in her absence the time dragged heavily: "I bragg'd formerly that I could not have too much time," he wrote in 1829: "I have a surfeit." Yet there were still many gleams of the old gaiety. One of these came in the spring of 1831, when for a month or two the Lamb household was almost its former cheerful self. Mary was quite well, and Emma, happily recovered from a serious illness the year before, was with them at Enfield. To amuse his companions Lamb wrote a couple of Latin epistles, one to Bernard Barton and one, full of puns and nursery rhymes rendered in doggerel Latin verse, to Cary (May 6, 1831).[1] Cary had sent as a gift to the brother and sister

[1] Another (unimportant) note from Lamb a month before this one (April 13) begins "Dear C."; the recipient is uncertain, but Cary, Coleridge, and Charles Cowden Clarke have all been suggested. Cary is unlikely, since all Lamb's letters to him before 1834 begin "Dear Sir."

a Latin translation of his favourite Euripides, and Lamb appropriately thanks him in elegant if not precisely Ciceronian Latin : " Assidens est mihi bona soror, Euripiden evolvens, donum vestrum, carissime Cary, pro quo gratias agimus, lecturi atque iterum lecturi idem," and so forth. Lamb had no Greek to speak of, but he was well seen in Latin, and Cary's gift was a happy thought. Probably it was to Cary that, about this time, Lamb said that he had got a better idea of the Greek tragedies from the Latin versions than from any English translations.[1]

Later in this year there is a reference to Cary in a letter from Lamb to Moxon about a copy of Lamb's *Album Verses*, to be presented to the Museum library through Cary ; [2] but we do not find the friends together again until the following spring. Our informant this time is Crabb Robinson, who had lately begun to read the *Commedia* in the original, with the assistance of Cary's translation. His diary for March 27, 1832, records his first meeting (presumably) with Cary, and incidentally shows the strong impression which the *Early French Poets* had made on Lamb :

[1] This is the sense of Lamb's remark as reported in a memoir of Abraham Hayward, the essayist and Q.C., which is prefixed to the selections from his correspondence (ed. H. E. Carlisle, 1886, 2 vol.). Lamb's remark is said to have suggested to Hayward the idea of translating into English prose Goethe's *Faust*. In 1833 he sent this to Lamb, who thought it well done, though he was not interested in Goethe. Cary is not named as the " friend " who conveyed Lamb's remark about Greek tragedy to Hayward, but he knew the young lawyer by this date ; a letter from Cary to Hayward, dated July 5, 1831, is extant, thanking him for a copy of one of his other translations, and asking for a second copy for the Museum library.

[2] Letter of Dec. 15, 1831. Mr. E. V. Lucas misses the point of Lamb's whimsical remark : " One Copy will go down to immortality *now*, the more lasting as the less its leaves are disturbed." Cary frequently presented to the Museum library books given by or begged from friends (see, for example, the last note). Lamb does not name the book Moxon is to send Cary, but the price he mentions (7s.) was that of his *Album Verses* (1830).

Read a little in Dante . . . I accompanied Lamb to Carey [sic] at the British Museum. He seemed a quiet and sensible man—I was pleased with him. We talked of his Dante—which however Lamb thinks inferior to his translations from the old French poets.

Lamb, however, had not yet attempted Dante in the original with Cary's version beside him ; when he did so, next year, his opinion was a good deal modified.

Here for a time we may leave Lamb and the friends immediately connected with him, while we turn to other matters of interest during the earlier Museum years. First to be noticed is a striking illustration of Cary's high reputation as a literary adviser, which carries us back for a moment to his boyish friendship with Thomas Lister, his co-disciple under Miss Seward.

Cary, as we have seen, had gradually lost touch with his friend. Up to 1800 they met now and then, and Cary seems to have shared Miss Seward's opinion of Lister's first wife, who had been Miss Harriet Seal, and whom the Swan described as "a sweet little creature." It may be that Cary also agreed with the same authority in *not* liking "insipid Miss Grove," who "had no mind," but became the second Mrs. Lister in 1805, very soon after the death of the first. At any rate, Cary and Lister do not seem to have corresponded after this event, and our next news comes only with the death of Lister in 1828. In April of that year his son by the first marriage, Thomas Henry Lister, the novelist, wrote informing Cary of his old friend's death and asking advice on the question of printing some of his father's literary productions. Apparently this project fell through ; but the younger Lister did not neglect the opportunity of seeking Cary's assistance in his own literary affairs. A week or two later he wrote asking Cary to read his play

Epicharis (founded on Tacitus), and asking for "rigid" criticism. Lister had scored a distinct success with his novel, *Granby*, two years before this, but evidently his head was not turned, for he shows a profound respect for the older man's judgment and uses the language almost of a disciple. Cary, with his usual good nature, induced Procter and other friends to push Lister's play at Drury Lane, and it was produced there in October, 1829. It is pleasant to be able to record that the tragedy was well received, though candour compels us to add that it reads very moderately. Cary had not, I think, Dr. Johnson's all-sufficient reason for keeping away from the Green Room, but this is the only known occasion on which he directly interested himself in the production of a play.[1]

We return now to Clare, whom we left in 1825 in illness and despondency. Things did not go any better with him in later years; his ill-health persisted, and there began to be serious disagreements between him and Taylor. Undoubtedly we must acquit the worthy publisher of any unfair design of making money out of the poet—indeed in the long run it was quite the other way—but it is not quite so certain that his treatment of Clare was a model of tact and comprehension. Cary, who with other London friends was appealed to as a mediator, did his best to smooth matters down, and an open breach was avoided. Probably some of the letters now lost, which passed between Clare and Cary in 1825-28, dealt with these unfortunate differences. Early in 1828 Clare was once more in London; but his awe of Cary and of the porter at the august institution where the translator of Dante now lived was so great that he hardly dared to call.

[1] For Dr. Johnson's reason see Dr. Birkbeck Hill's edition of Boswell (Oxford, 1887), i, p. 201. Lister's play was printed (anonymously) in 1829.

However, Taylor pointed out that Cary would be disappointed, if not offended, by such neglect, and Clare, plucking up courage, was received with all the kindness he could wish. Cary showed him over the library, which at once delighted and almost terrified him : " If I had so many books to run to I should not know where to begin," he said.

Clare's first letter after this visit (January 3, 1829) is a long and interesting one. It includes some remarks on Hayley and Erasmus Darwin, and on Cary's Dante ; but the major part is occupied with a project of the writer's. For several years Clare had been attempting imitations of the older English poets, and—inspired no doubt by the rather dangerous example of Chatterton—had been testing his success by sending the results as "genuine antiquities" to various editors. The poem which he copies for Cary in this letter—*Death*, by " Marvel "—had been accepted by Lamb's friend William Hone without question, and appeared in the *Every-Day Book* for June 28, 1825, as a new discovery.[1] A later attempt to deceive a more discerning critic, James Montgomery, the poet and editor of the *Sheffield Iris*, was unsuccessful ; nevertheless, Clare tries in this letter to enlist Cary's support against Taylor and in favour of publishing a volume in disguise :

I write to beg your opinion of the inclosed Poem as one of those I intended to pass off as the writings of others—this I sent to the *Everyday Book* as the production of Andrew Marvel, and the Editor took it for granted that it was so and paid me a compliment in praising it which he would not have done perhaps had it passed under my own name, and as I still have thoughts of going on with the deception I have sent it to request your opinion of it. I know nothing of the

[1] Cf. J. L. Cherry, *Life and Remains of Clare* (1873), p. 269. Mr. Blunden also reprints this poem (beginning " Why should man's high aspiring mind ") in his recent selection (1920).

writings of the old Poets further then the *Specimens of Ellis* and the *Songs of Ritson,* but the idea of their manner is all I want to be acquainted with—I had read that Marvel was a great advocate for liberty and as death is a great leveller I thought it would add to the disguise to father upon him that subject. I have written several others for Sir Walter Raleigh, Sir Henry Wooton [sic], etc., etc. ; the old manner is all that I attempt, with sprinkling a few old words [h]ere and there—but Taylor wished me not to disguise them under the names of others, but publish them under the title of *Visits of the Earlier Muses.* But I thought if I could succeed well I should like to have published them as old things found in imaginary Books and MSS. There would be no harm in it I think, would there ? You see I want your advice in the matter and I know you will give it me. Hayley's Poems which you so kindly presented me with I have read, and I do not like him near so well as Darwin, but perhaps the subjects are the cause—the measure in which he has translated some passages of Dante is very curious, but it don't strike me as one well suited for the Epic.[1] Blank verse and blank verse alone appears to be the natural style of that sort of poetry, at least it appears so to me, and the choice of it in your Translation was a very happy one, and I wonder much that its excellence hath not made it more popular, but fashion is no test of merit, that's left to time.

Cary's reply (January 18, 1829) to the first part of this letter does credit to his tact and tolerance. He does not "goggle," but he makes his views quite clear, and supports them in the way most likely to appeal to Clare—on literary rather than moral grounds :

[1] Hayley's translation of the *Inferno,* cantos i-iii, in *terza rima* has been mentioned in chapter iii. Clare does not seem to realise that it was in the measure of the original, but his opinion is sound in its way. Even Shelley could not make *terza rima* sound anything but "curious" in English.

I quite agree with Mr. Taylor that it will be better not to attempt any deception with respect to the poems that you have written or intend to write in the style of our elder Bards. I do not remember ever to have heard of any advantage resulting from such attempts. Not that I see so much harm in them as many do. But I think it more advisable to avoid what might injure you in the good opinion of some who are at present your friends. And in truth I must own I like you better in your own natural guise of John Clare than in the borrow'd trim of Sir Walter Raleigh, Sir Harry Wootton [sic], or any other Sir of Elizabeth's or James's days. What you most excel in is the description of such natural objects as you have yourself had the opportunity of observing, and which none before you have noticed, though every one instantly recognizes their truth. Now nothing of this sort can be introduced into such imitations as you meditate. They must consist of mere moralizing. Forcible you may indeed make them, but still they will want the livelier touches of your pencil.

Clare wisely took the hint, and all thought of deception was abandoned. In fact, clever as some of these imitations are, they have no touch of Chatterton's genius for leaping across centuries of literary tradition, and are inferior to the more characteristic work of Clare.

The poet's next letter (January 25, 1830) has been mentioned in connection with his wistful enquiries after Lamb and Wainewright ; but we may give here the passage Cary's reply to which we have already quoted :

Do you ever see or hear anything of Wainwright, that facetious good-hearted fellow ? I long to hear something of him agen ; and where is Charles Lamb ? I have never seen him since the year 1824—what a season ! Do you ever see or hear anything of him now, or do you know where he is to be found ? If I could procure his address I wanted

to write to him, but nobody can tell me where he lives now, farther then that it is " some distance from London," which is a bad direction to find him with.

Whether Clare, on receiving Lamb's address from Cary, wrote to him, we do not know ; if so, no trace of the correspondence remains. Lamb's only surviving letter to Clare belongs to 1822 ; it contains the charming little account of his visit to France, with a eulogy of frogs—" the nicest little rabbity things you ever tasted."

Cary and Clare continued to correspond for two or three years more, but no further letters from Clare have survived. Part of a letter from Cary dated October 20, 1832, has already been quoted ; the rest deals with the writer's share in a project for raising a small sum of money to stock the little farm at Northborough on which Clare was now established. This new plan seemed to answer for a time, and in 1835 another volume of Clare's poems (his last, *The Rural Muse*) had a fair success. But already, worn out with poverty, toil, and disappointment, Clare was beginning to suffer from the hallucinations which in 1837 brought about his removal to a lunatic asylum. He lived on, neither sane nor really insane, but sick in mind, until 1864. The heart-rending story of those twenty-seven years, of Clare's obsession with the memory of his first love, Mary Joyce, and of his utter neglect by his wife and children, is not here to be told. Cary heard of him for some years through Taylor, but he could do nothing now for the unhappy poet, and fresh troubles of his own were already descending upon him. In taking leave of Clare, we may give Cary's last letter to him, a brief note sent with the translation of Pindar :

British Museum,
Septr. 9, 1833.

Dear Clare,—I send you a translation of an old Greek Poet. It is all about chariot and horse-racing, boxing, running, heathen gods and goddesses, etc., etc. ; so I don't expect it will be much to your taste ; and therefore don't insist on your reading it. Only it serves to show that you are not forgotten. It will give me pleasure to hear that you and your family are going on well ; that you contrived to stock your little farm, and that it is yielding you due encrease.

Yours truly,
H. F. Cary.

Had all Clare's friends shown such kindliness, humour, and sound sense in their dealings with him, the final disaster might have been averted.

Cary's private life during the first five or six years in Bloomsbury is devoid of any striking incident, and scarcely any letters to members of his family have survived from this period. His four elder sons were now well on the way to finding their own niche in life. William Lucius, his heir, came home from foreign service with the rank of captain, married in 1832, and settled at Leamington. Henry, the law student, and James, who was chaplain to a military asylum at Southampton, were both married by 1827, and within the next five years Cary became a grandfather six deep. His own time was pretty fully occupied in the Museum library, and his only publication between 1825 and 1833 was one to which he of necessity gave little time, the third (1831) edition of the Dante. This had been talked of as early as 1826, but it was not until 1830 that the agreement with Taylor was signed. The edition was of 1000 copies in foolscap octavo, to be sold at 18s. the three volumes, and

for this Cary received £100. As we have noted, revision had to be postponed for the present, and the third edition reprints that of 1819 without change.

The translation of Pindar, to whom Cary devoted almost as many years as to Dante, was continued, though very slowly, during leisure moments. Settled work was possible only in the summer vacations, when a month was regularly passed with relatives in the country. We get a glimpse of Cary's chief vacation amusement in a letter of September 5, 1829, written just after his return to the Museum from Worcester. Birch, the recipient, had apparently been trying to induce his friend to undertake some prose work on a large scale—perhaps the history of Italian poetry which Cary often wished to attempt :

> I fear you overrate my critical ability [Cary tells his friend], as you certainly do my command of time and energy to execute much more work than my duties here necessarily demand of me. During the last month indeed I have found more relief in returning to my old business of mangling poor Pindar in an English translation. I fancied the Severn to be Alpheus, King John (who lies in the cathedral at full length) Pelops, and the races, which happened to be going on while we were there, the Olympic games ; and probably the resemblance was about as great as is my version to the original.

At last, in the autumn of 1832, the Pindar was finished and sent to press. An unforeseen calamity delayed its actual publication for another year ; but it will be convenient to pause here and make a brief examination of the work.

Among foreign poets Pindar was the only serious rival to Dante in Cary's affections. Probably it was the union of what Matthew Arnold called "high seriousness" with a vivid pictorial power, which appealed particularly to Cary

in both poets. He had read and reread the *Odes* and the *Divina Commedia* till he must have known them by heart almost from end to end ; and in the one case as in the other his translation was a labour of love. But his way of approach to the problem of interpreting the Greek and the Italian poet was not quite the same with each. Dante, as we have seen, he found almost virgin soil, and such slight and inadequate attempts as had previously been made affected him very little. But Pindar had been the happy hunting-ground of ambitious scholars throughout the eighteenth century, and even earlier. Not many of the eighteenth century versions were successful ; it will be remembered that Dr. Johnson, though he praised Gilbert West's, admitted (in a very pleasant phrase) that they were "sometimes too paraphrastical." This was the besetting sin of the age, of course. But a more important point is the general influence of Pindar on the style of English lyrical verse, which began (more or less) with Cowley's sham "Pindariques," and culminated in the much more successful odes of Gray.

Gray indeed may be said to have founded a school of lyrical verse of which Cary was one of the last survivors ; it has only a little in common with the verse of Pope, Johnson, and Goldsmith, less still with the "Miltonising" blank verse poets, and nothing at all with the new romanticism of Chatterton or the naturalism of Wordsworth. It is to the tradition of Gray, himself steeped in Pindar, that Cary's translation of the Greek poet belongs. The effects of this are not entirely fortunate. Cary seems sometimes unable to pierce through Gray's imitations to the Greek original itself. This is evident, for instance, in the first Pythian ode, which Gray had echoed in his "Progress of Poesy ;" and another unfortunate example is the opening of the second Olympic :

Ye hymns, that rule the lyre,
What God, what hero shall inspire,
What mortal man, the warbled song ?

Pindar says nothing about "warbling," though Gray might have done.

Nevertheless, at its best Cary's version does suggest that the style of Gray, with its artificialities kept properly in check, is the most suitable to render the pictorialism and the unfailing dignity of the Greek poet. Cary shows also a wise independence in refusing to follow the elaborate metrical structure of the original, with strophe, antistrophe, and epode ; in fact, even in Gray's original odes, this had led to an increased artificiality. Instead therefore Cary used short rhymed lines, the structure being continuous. By this means he was able to get a certain amount, at least, of rapidity, and to keep as a rule fairly close to the literal sense. He succeeds best, as we might expect, in the quieter reflective passages which were his favourites, and similarly in the brief gnomic sentiments, "the effect of which," as he himself had written (in the essay on Ronsard), "results not more from their appositeness than their compression." Many of these, whether adequate to the original or not, perfectly express Cary's own patient and dignified philosophy of life—the opening of the eighth Pythian, for instance :

O loving-hearted Quiet, thou whose reign
Doth mighty cities best sustain ;
Daughter of Justice ; in whose hands are held
Of counsel and of war the sovran keys. . . .

Or this, from the eighth Nemean :

The simple paths of life be mine ;
That when this being I resign,

I to my children may bequeath
A name they shall not blush to hear.
Others for gold the vow may breathe,
Or lands that see no limit near :
But fain would I live out my days,
Belov'd by those with whom they're past,
In mine own city, till at last
In earth my limbs are clad ;
Still praising what is worthy praise,
But scatt'ring censure on the bad.
For virtue by the wise and just
Exalted, grows up as a tree,
That springeth from the dust,
And by the green dews fed
Doth raise aloft her head,
And in the blithe air waves her branches free.

Cary's Pindar, though it appeared (in 1833) without a single explanatory note and lacking even a preface, was well received. Both the *Edinburgh* and the *Quarterly* reviewed it in flattering terms ; the former pronounced it "clear, nervous, and polished," and the latter declared that Cary had been "less ashamed of his original than any other translator." Friends also gave it high praise. Landor thought it a fitting companion to the Dante ; and William Shepherd, a Liverpool acquaintance of whom we shall learn more later on, compared it with the Greek and wrote that it was "faithful, spirited, and in the true diction of English poetry." But the want of a commentary was a serious obstacle to its popularity ; and as the projected second edition with notes never appeared, the work fell into undeserved neglect and has seldom been noticed.[1]

[1] One exception must be mentioned, the brief but sympathetic criticism in Mr. Oliver Elton's *Survey of English Literature*, 1780-1830 (1912), ii, p. 260-1. The *Edinburgh* notice appeared in April,

The calamity which delayed the publication of the Pindar came in the autumn of 1832. On November 22 Cary's wife died after only a few days' illness. This was a severer blow even than the loss of his daughters ; and remembering the effects of those earlier bereavements, we can scarcely be surprised that Cary's mind once more gave way under the strain :

The first effect of this dreadful blow [writes his son] was apparently a stunning of all sensation. There was but little outward show of grief, an awful stillness without composure, as it were an amazement of all the faculties of mind and body. In a few days a look of mere childishness, almost approaching to a suspension of vitality, marked the countenance which had but now been beaming with intellect. Then followed constantly recurring attacks of delirium, with an occasional and fitful recovery of self. At such moments there seemed to be going on a fearful struggle between the heart and the mind, or reason. My father was fully and painfully conscious of his own unhappy condition. He exerted all the powers of his mind and will to resist and overcome the dreadful malady that seemed about to overwhelm him. At intervals, when he was able to throw himself out of himself, and to think of the feelings of others who were dear to him, he for the time got the better of his own sufferings, and could speak and write with a considerable degree of composure.

This attack, fortunately, was of shorter duration than that of 1807, and in five or six weeks Cary had recovered sufficiently to be taken abroad for a change of air and scene. Towards the end of January, 1833, the Museum authorities having granted him six months' leave of absence, he set out, in the care of his son Francis, for Italy.

1834 (vol. lix, pp. 124-142), that in the *Quarterly* in March, 1834 (vol. li, pp. 18-54). In 1842 Cary wrote to his friend Digby : " The Pindar is not half sold."

This tour, which had the desired effect in restoring Cary's health, covered nearly the whole six months, four of which were spent in Italy itself. The route followed may be briefly indicated. France was crossed by easy stages, three weeks being occupied in getting to Genoa via Paris and the Riviera. After three days in Genoa they proceeded to Pisa and Florence, where they stayed a fortnight. On March 2 they went southwards, and pausing only for a few days at Rome, reached Naples on the 12th. Here they remained a fortnight; but Cary did not like the noise and bustle of the city of the forty thousand beggars, and was glad to return to Rome, where they found quiet lodgings for a month in the Via del Babuino, at the foot of the Monte Pincio. The homeward route was through Florence again, and by Bologna and Parma to Venice, where a fortnight was spent; then over the Brenner Pass to Innsbruck and Munich. From here they passed though Nuremberg and Frankfort, and so down the Rhine to Holland, crossing from Ostend to London by steamboat.[1]

It was in somewhat melancholy circumstances that Cary gained his first sight of the country whose art and literature had been his study and delight for nearly half a century. Naturally it would be futile to expect that he should view the famous scenes, of which he had read so often, with the keen emotions which he would have experienced in his younger days. In fact he found distraction from grief less in historic buildings or in famous pictures than in the glorious landscapes of Italy in early spring,

> "A sight to chase
> All sadness but despair,"

as he quotes pathetically in his journal. Even at Florence,

[1] In the *Memoir* (ii, pp. 200-25) are eight letters written from abroad and a daily journal kept during the tour.

"the most delightful city I know," he was mostly content to leave Francis to copy pictures in the Uffizi while he explored the countryside—much to the surprise of a young Frenchman who had joined them in hiring a carriage from Nice. "He is equally shocked," wrote Cary, "at my taking two cups of coffee instead of one every morning and evening, and at my spending my time anywhere out of the picture galleries."[1] At Rome, again, they witnessed some of the numerous and splendid religious ceremonies during Holy Week; but more prominent, in Cary's list of attractions in his letter to Price, are "the ruins, and above all the many green nooks and lanes among them," of which, he says, "one could never be weary." Here is his description, in the same letter, of a walk to the basilica of San Paolo and back over the Monte Aventino:

Francis had begun making a sketch of a Paul Veronese, the splendid colours of which have captivated him, in the Palazzo Borghese; and I set out solitary from this point near the entrance of the city, where almost all the English are assembled. . . . In some part of my walk, even within the walls, I seemed to be almost in a deserted land. The lizards running backwards and forwards along the roads,—the birds, lineally descended, I suppose, from those which charmed the ears of Ovid so many centuries ago,—the flowering weeds and shrubs that invested the old walls, and a peasant sleeping in the sun, all this was enough to make me turn romantic in my old age. Your sons will laugh at me, as well they may; but you, my dear Price, would not have been much wiser.

[1] Another curious encounter with a foreigner took place at Parma. A young Italian who had heard of Cary's Dante asked him to read some English aloud for the pronunciation, which he had been learning from an Italian teacher: "I read a few verses in the Book of Job," Cary notes briefly in his journal.

There were no trams or motor-cars in Cary's day, to be sure ; but it may still be doubted whether his method is not the best way to see Italy, even for a younger man—unless indeed he be a classical archæologist or a writer of tourist guide books ; *non ragioniam di lor.*

Cary nevertheless did not by any means neglect the museums, picture galleries, and libraries. Both in Italy and in Germany he spent a good deal of time in examining manuscripts of Dante and in making enquiries at the great libraries on behalf of the British Museum. He was also fortunate in meeting several old friends in Italy, and in making a number of new acquaintances. The first of these encounters was entirely unexpected :

At Rome [Cary writes to his son Henry from Naples] we met with at least one more association than we had reckoned on, and that a very agreeable one. As Francis and I stood near the Colosseum, a man with a book under his arm passed between us at a quick pace. It struck us both that it was very like Darley, and on our saying so to each other, Francis bawled out his name ; so he came back, and we passed the rest of the day together, and shall I hope frequently meet when we return to Rome.

Cary's wish was gratified, and they spent many pleasant days with Darley on their return to Rome from Naples, and again later at Florence.

To Naples Cary bore letters of introduction from Darley to J. C. Hare, the part-author of *Guesses at Truth*, and from Rogers (who had shown much kindly sympathy in Cary's misfortune) to T. J. Mathias, the Italian scholar and author of a once-famous satire, *The Pursuits of Literature*. Hare, one of a talented family in whom an intimate knowledge of Italy became traditional, offered valuable help in finding the choicest sights of the neighbourhood. Mathias, on the

other hand, was almost a recluse, and when Cary sought him out in the old Palazzo Pizzofalcone, he talked nearly as much about diet, climate, and the terrors of the *curricoli* in the Neapolitan streets as about the Italian literature to which he and Cary were both devoted. In his prime Mathias, it has been said, wrote better Italian, both in prose and verse, than any Englishman since Milton. He had published a sumptuous edition of Gray (which nearly ruined him), numerous compilations from Italian authors, which Cary had found very useful, and several translations from English poetry into Italian, besides original verse of his own in English, Latin, and Italian. All these activities formed a bond of union with Cary; but the eccentric old Anglo-Italian was now verging on senility, and his memory was not of the best. Cary sent him a "kind letter and elegant sonnet" (not now forthcoming), and in his anxiety to return the compliment he contrived to get into a sad muddle: "I really beg your pardon," he writes in the last of four notes concerning this weighty business, "for sending you the *Poesie Inglesi* a second time, but it was a mistake, for I thought I had before desired your acceptance of the *Knight of the Red Cross* by Spenser in Tuscan dress, and not the former volume." He sends a copy of the translation from the *Faerie Queene* with this note; but he was still a little puzzled, and 'here's yet a postscript': "I trust that I have not made another mistake: but pray excuse me for my intention." [1]

[1] The *Poesie Inglesi* was no doubt the *Poesie di Scrittori illustri Inglesi, recate in verso Italiano*, printed at Naples in 1830, and containing Italian renderings of *Lycidas*, Thomson's *Castle of Indolence*, etc. An amusing account of Mathias at Naples may be seen in R. R. Madden, *Literary Life and Correspondence of the Countess of Blessington*, 3 vols., 2nd ed., 1855, ii, p. 150. Almost his sole conversation at dinner-parties, she said, consisted in exclaiming: "God bless my soul! What a delicious dish! God bless my soul!" But the Countess was capable of a good deal of embroidering.

At Rome, in company with Darley, Cary met a number of interesting people, chief among them Joseph Severn, the friend who had brought Keats to Rome and had watched over his last hours with so much devotion. In 1833 Severn was still painting and studying in Rome, to which he was later to return as British Consul. He spent several days with Cary and Francis, taking them round the studios of many eminent artists, including Thorwaldsen and Gibson, the English sculptor who had studied under the famous Dane. With Severn also Cary called on Dr. Wiseman, the future cardinal—probably to discuss the theology of Dante ; but this acquaintance does not seem to have been followed up. Cary met Severn again later on in Venice, where the painter was busy copying Tintoretto's " Crucifixion " in the Scuola di San Rocco.

In Florence Cary took the opportunity of calling on his old schoolfellow Landor, whom he had probably not seen since the Oxford days forty years before, though the two had heard a good deal of each other through Birch. Cary stayed a day or two at the Villa Gherardesca, Landor's beautiful house on the road to Fiesole, discussing Dante, Pindar, and Shakespeare (Landor's *Examination of William Shakespeare Touching Deerstealing* being then on the stocks). Cary and Francis also accompanied their eccentric host on one of his favourite expeditions into Florence in search of " dirt-cheap " old masters among the picture-dealers. We may well doubt whether Cary, any more than Browning later on, was able to save the self-willed poet from being swindled.

On July 10 Cary was back in London, physically at least almost as well as ever. There was no immediate danger of a mental relapse, though his troubles had left him scarcely fit for his Museum duties, to which nevertheless, after a

stay with relatives in the country, he returned in September. Our first news of him is a letter from Lamb, dated September 9, and welcoming him back to England: "We shall be quite well by the time you return from Worcestershire, and most most (observe the repetition) glad to see you here or anywhere." The Lambs' "here" was now Edmonton. Since 1829 they had been lodging with the Westwood family next door to their first residence at Enfield; but though the abandonment of housekeeping was a relief to Mary, the Westwoods in time proved a disappointment, and ultimately became "*hated* and *detestable* people." In the spring of 1833, while Cary was at Florence, Lamb had taken his courageous resolution to lodge in future with his sister at the Waldens' small private asylum in Edmonton; and here they remained till the end: "I am 3 or 4 miles nearer the Great City," Lamb wrote to Wordsworth, "Coaches half-price less, and going always, of which I will avail myself. I have few friends left there, one or two tho' most beloved. But London Streets and faces cheer me inexpressibly." Crabb Robinson and Cary were the friends of whom he saw most during the last years of his life.

The letter to Cary of September 9 acknowledges a packet, delayed through being left at Moxon's while he was on his honeymoon with Lamb's Emma. It contained, no doubt, Cary's Pindar, and also an "act" of Darley's, which Cary had brought back to England for Lamb's criticism.[1] Finally, in a postcript which is longer than the letter, Lamb tells of

[1] Perhaps this was part of the tragedy *Thomas à Becket*, which Moxon published in 1840, and of which Darley was particularly solicitous. Lamb grumbles about his handwriting: "He begins some of his words with a letter which is unknown to the English typography"; but though some of his capitals are peculiar, we ought perhaps in justice to note that Darley's writing in general was beautifully clear. Possibly Lamb was not quite at his best for reading poetry when he received the manuscript.

the great exploit which he and his sister had carried to a triumphant conclusion during Cary's absence :

You will be amused to hear that my sister and I have, with the aid of Emma, scrambled through the "Inferno" by the blessed furtherance of your polar-star translation. I think we scarce left anything unmadeout. But our partner has left us, and we have not yet resumed. Mary's chief pride in it was that she should some day brag of it to you. Your Dante and Sandys' Ovid are the only helpmates of translations. Neither of you shirk a word.

This wonderful achievement was in the early days of 1833, when Mary was sixty-nine and Charles nearly fifty-eight. Lamb was justly proud of it. He boasts of it first in a letter of February, 1833 ; again in May, 1834, writing to his old friend, Manning, he gives a more particular account :

Last year, in a good interval, I giving some lessons to Emma, now Mrs. Moxon, in the *sense* part of her Italian (I know no words), Mary pertinaciously undertook, being 69, to read the Inferno all thro' with the help of his [Cary's] translation, and we got thro' it with Dictionaries and Grammars, of course to our satisfaction. Her perseverance was gigantic, almost painful. Her head was over her task, like a sucking bee, morn to night. We were beginning the Purgatory, but get on less rapidly, our great authority for grammar, Emma, being fled, but should have proceeded but for this misfortune.

To the autumn of 1833 also must belong a note from Lamb to John Forster, asking him to "come down with M. and *Dante* and L. E. L. on Sunday." [1] Cary and

[1] Mr. E. V. Lucas puts this among the January letters, but Cary was abroad till July, and it obviously comes after the letter to him of Sept. 9. There is a second version of this note, which Mr. Lucas prints as Lamb's ; but the MS. (at South Kensington) is not in his hand, and is pretty certainly merely Forster's memory copy of the original, which he must have mislaid for a time.

Forster's companions would be Moxon and the romantic poetess, Letitia Elizabeth Landon, dear to the readers of albums and annuals. She was at this time engaged to Forster, but did not marry him. When she did marry (in 1838), she died mysteriously within a few months in circumstances which were never quite cleared up.

It was at one of these Edmonton meetings, late in 1833, that Cary noticed Lamb's loneliness in his new home (more complete since Emma's marriage), and proposed the regular "third Wednesdays" which remained an institution for over a twelvemonth. Here is Henry Cary's account of this pleasant arrangement :

That there might be no uncertainty in their times of meeting, my father proposed that he [Charles] and Miss Lamb should dine at the Museum on a fixed day in each month ; at first Lamb, from feelings of modesty, was for declining the proffered hospitality, but his sister said, "Ah, when we went to Edmonton, I told Charles something would turn up, and so it did, you see." And I believe that this "third Wednesday" was regarded by all the party as a red-letter day ; as such, at all events, my father used to mark it, long beforehand in his almanack.[1]

Probably the first meeting in accordance with this regular programme was in November or December. The arrangement is alluded to, at all events, in Lamb's next letter to the Cary family, on December 21. The main theme of this, however, is Lamb's old favourite, Hogarth ; as it has not appeared in any collection of Lamb's letters, and is

[1] This seems to be based on the P.S. to Lamb's letter to Manning of May 10, 1834, part of which has been quoted above. Canon Ainger printed the letter but not the PS., which has not appeared, I think, except in the private edition issued by the Boston Bibliophile Society (Boston, 1905, vol. v, p. 341). Lamb says that Cary's invitation came "last year," i.e., in 1833.

besides the only surviving note to F. S. Cary, the artist son of the translator, I give it here complete from the original :

Francis Cary, Esq.,
Revd. Mr. Cary, British Museum, Bloomsbury.
[*P.M.* 21 *Dec.*, 1833.]

Dear F.,—A neighbour has purchased a Hogarth, as he believes it ; it is a capital picture. Now you, or your father, will oblige us by enquiring of Mr. Ottley, whether he knows of such a Subject being engraved, and whom it purports to be from. 'Tis Doctor Rock ; and an Oyster Girl, opening Oysters for the Doctor. The picture is from a Nobleman's Collection.

My sister sends rememb.ces but of course if we receive no *note* from one of you, we shall not think of coming up to the Museum next month.

C. LAMB.

Church Street,
Edmonton.

[*Endorsed by the recipient*] Mem. to ask Mr. Ottley to ask Mr. Chapman.

This interesting little token of Lamb's undying passion for Hogarth raises several small problems, and a brief digression to state if not solve them will perhaps be tolerated. Whether Francis Cary got the desired information from Ottley, the new Keeper of Prints at the Museum, or from the Rev. Mr. Chapman, who was a Hogarth collector, we do not know.[1] But we may be fairly certain of the identity of the picture Lamb describes. It corresponds closely enough to that entitled *Oysters, or St. James's Day*, which (according

[1] William Young Ottley (1771-1836), appointed Keeper of Prints in 1833, was an authority on painting and engraving ; Lamb would meet him, no doubt, at Cary's table. Chapman is mentioned as a collector of Hogarths in J. B. Nichols, *Anecdotes of Hogarth* (1833). p. 407.

to the late Mr. Austin Dobson) includes portraits of the Duke of Wharton, Bab Selby (an oyster wench), and other persons. If this is the picture, Lamb must have mistaken the Duke of Wharton, the profligate president of the "Hell-fire Club" (suppressed in 1721), for Dr. Rock, the notorious quack, who figures in *The Harlot's Progress* and other engravings by Hogarth. No doubt if the slip was pointed out to him at the time, Lamb said it made no odds; there was little to choose between the Duke and the Doctor, anyhow. The attribution of this picture to Hogarth seems to be open to doubt; Mr. Dobson says that "it belonged in 1833 to Mr. G. Weller, who alleged that he obtained it from a gentleman who got it from Hogarth." [1] I have failed to find any sign that it was ever engraved. Mr. Weller would seem to be the neighbour Lamb mentions; one would like to know more of him, especially since Lamb does not appear to have made many new acquaintances when he moved to Edmonton.

To return to the "third Wednesdays": Lamb's doubt about the meeting for January, 1834, cannot now be cleared up; but in any case poor Mary Lamb could not go, for her old illness came on again early in the New Year and lasted for four months. Lamb, however, went alone, for by the spring the institution was well established. As an addition to the programme it was now arranged that, after sleeping at Southampton Buildings (a lodging kept by the

[1] *William Hogarth*, new ed., 1907, p. 218. Mr. Dobson's main source of information was apparently the *Anecdotes of Hogarth* (J. B. Nichols, 1833), p. 376, where the title is given as "St. James's Day or the First Day of Oysters," and we are told that the painting "was exhibited, a few years ago, at Mr. Forest's, in Piccadilly." Some of the details in Nichols's description of the picture seem to be open to question; thus Betterton, the actor, and Lavinia Fenton, of *The Beggars' Opera* fame, are named as two of the minor figures; but Betterton died in 1710, when the future Polly was only two years old—and when the Duke of Wharton himself was only twelve.

Misses Buffam which the Lambs had used in 1830), Charles should breakfast on the Thursday with Crabb Robinson, the friendly ex-barrister. We learn this from the letter to Manning (May 10, 1834), which has already been noticed in another connection. Not unnaturally Lamb writes in a melancholy strain :

I struggle to town rarely, and then to see London, with little other motive, for what is left there hardly ? The streets and shops entertaining ever, else I feel as in a desert, and get me home to my cave. Save that once a month I pass a day, a gleam of my life, with Cary at the Museum (he is the flower of clergyman) and breakfast next morning with Robinson. I look to this as a treat. It sustains me.

He continues with what was to be his last written eulogy of Cary, whose only " vices," he says, are a certain scepticism on the subject of Parson Adams's Greek scholarship and a heretical preference of Shenstone's pastoral ballads to his *Schoolmistress.*

We hear of some of the later gatherings from Crabb Robinson—first in his diary for March 20, 1834, where there is a significant allusion to Lamb's affection for drink, only part of which need be quoted :

He dines once a month at Carey's [sic], and he is to breakfast with me when he is next in town. To have so excellent a creature, with all his infirmities, in one's rooms is delightful, but mixed with pain on account of the destruction he is rapidly bringing on himself.

Fortunately at the April visit Lamb was, Robinson says, " in better health than when he came last." No doubt he got home to Edmonton, as he said on another occasion, " half as sober as a judge." In May Robinson was away at Bury with a sick brother, but probably Charles, and

perhaps his sister also, went to Cary's as usual. At any rate, Mary was well enough in June to accompany her brother (on Wednesday, the 18th) to the Museum, and to breakfast with Robinson, now back in London, next morning. Robinson as a diarist is useful rather than entertaining, and he says here little more than "Poor M. L. was not strong —but C. L. was quiet." Nor are his later "Reminiscences" more satisfying; but luckily an American poet, N. P. Willis, had begged an invitation to breakfast at Robinson's with the Lambs this morning, and his account gives us at any rate a vivid picture of the brother and sister as they appeared at this time. Mr. E. V. Lucas has printed Willis's article almost entire, but we may borrow a little here in default of a Boswell for the dinner-party at Cary's the night before:

Enter a gentleman in black small-clothes and gaiters, short and very slight in his person, his head set on his shoulders with a thoughtful, forward bent, his hair just sprinkled with gray, a beautiful deep-set eye, aquiline nose, and a very indescribable mouth. Whether it expressed most humour or feeling, good-nature or a kind of whimsical peevishness, or twenty other things which passed over it by turns, I cannot in the least be certain.

His sister . . . came in after him. She is a small, bent figure, evidently a victim to ill-health, and hears with difficulty. Her face has been, I should think, a fine and handsome one, and her bright gray eye is still full of intelligence and fire. . . .

Nothing could be more delightful than the kindness and affection between the brother and the sister, though Lamb was continually taking advantage of her deafness to mystify her with the most singular gravity upon every topic that was started. "Poor Mary!" said he, "she hears all of an epigram but the point." "What are you saying of me,

Charles ? " she asked. " Mr. Willis," said he, raising his voice, " admires *your Confessions of a Drunkard* very much, and I was saying it was no merit of yours that you understood the subject." We had been speaking of this admirable essay (which is his own) half an hour before.[1]

The July appointments were duly kept, but they must have been overshadowed by the almost hourly-expected death of that great man Coleridge, which took place a few days later. Neither Lamb nor Cary attended the funeral, Cary apparently because his arrangements were fixed for a month's tour in France. On this expedition he was accompanied by his sons Francis and Richard. They visited the chief cities of Normandy and then went south to the Auvergne, staying some days at Clermont, and taking many walks in the district of the Mont Doré. Cary's journal of this tour, which is printed in the *Memoir*, shows clearly that his faculties both physical and mental were now fully recovered. He makes a number of exact observations regarding the scenery, the state of the country, and the manners of the peasants, and in the larger towns he carried out many enquiries at the libraries on behalf of the British Museum.

Back in London on September 1, Cary hastened to notify the Lambs that they were expected as usual on the third Wednesday. His letter was nearly too late (Moxon again proving negligent) ; but at the eleventh hour he received an acceptance headed with the hearty words of Sir Hugh Evans in the *Merry Wives of Windsor :* " By Cot's plessing we will not be absence at the grace," and rejoicing " to claim you back to your proper centre, books and Bibliothecae." [2]

[1] *Life of Lamb*, 2nd edition, 1905, p. 263-4. Willis's account appeared first in the *New York Mirror*, and was reissued in 1835 in *Pencillings by the Way*.

[2] The date is Sept. 12, 1834. Lamb seems to have fancied that

Henry Cary says that this was their last meeting, but there is more than one reason for believing him to be mistaken. On October 18 Lamb ends an unimportant note to Cary (about a Widows' Fund Society to which he subscribed through his friend) with "Yours, every third Wednesday," which shows the engagement still held. There is little doubt, also, that it was in October or November that the amusing letter was written in which Lamb apologises for what was probably the last of his drinking exploits. He once declared that he never got drunk twice in the same house; but I think Cary's must have been an exception to the rule. Or perhaps we ought to say that previously Lamb had only been *tipsy* at Cary's table, while now, for the first and last time, he got really *drunk*. Not to speak it profanely, this evening was in some sense the Grand Finale of Lamb's life; and his letter is worthy of the almost sublime theme. There is plenty to show that Cary was not seriously perturbed and had not the least intention of "de-viting" Lamb to come on third Wednesdays. Some clerical judges of a rather different type from Cary (and non-clerical ones too) have seen fit to deplore Lamb's weakness for liquor as if it were simply the disgusting vice of a sodden wastrel. Cary's view was more charitable, and more sensible besides. Shall we not stretch a point for a man of such genius as Lamb?—or (perhaps even more willingly) for a man who had endured so much? The risk is not very great.

This last letter from Lamb is a very long and a very brilliant one, and should be read entire; we must not quote here more than is immediately to our purpose—a few lines

Cary's "peregrinations," of which he demands an account, were in Germany and Holland instead of France. Perhaps Cary had been planning his German tour (which came next year), and Lamb confused the two.

near the end, containing an appropriately exact reminiscence of a passage in Virgil's *Georgics*:

. . . I had imaged to myself a zodiac of third Wednesdays irradiating by glimpses the Edmonton dulness. . . . I am de-vited to come on Wednesdays. Villanous old age that, with second childhood, brings linked hand in hand her inseparable twin, new inexperience, which knows not effects of liquor. Where I was to have sate for a sober, middle-aged-and-a-half gentleman, literary too, the neat-fingered artist can educe no notions but of a dissolute Silenus, lecturing natural philosophy to a jeering Chromius or a Mnasilus. Pudet.

The "neat-fingered artist" is Cary's son Francis, who at his father's request had begun, some months before, the joint portrait of Charles and his sister which is now in the National Portrait Gallery. As this is both the only joint likeness and the only extant portrait of Mary Lamb, its history has a particular interest, and I therefore quote the account which Francis Cary wrote many years later, shortly before his death in 1880:

I commenced the portraits of Charles and Mary Lamb, which were painted entirely from life, at my studio in Hart Street, Bloomsbury, in the summer of 1834. There had been for some time an engagement that they should dine with us at my father's residence, in the British Museum, on the third Wednesday in each month. My father wishing me to paint their portraits, it was arranged that one or other of them should give me a sitting every Thursday, before their return home to Edmonton, where they then resided, and this continued up to the time of his death, in December, 1834.[1]

[1] Letter of Dec. 7, 1878; printed in *Scribner's Monthly*, March, 1881, p. 697. The writer goes on to defend his picture from a charge of unlikeness, due as he points out to a mistake of Crabb

MARY AND CHARLES LAMB IN 1834

From the painting by F. S. Cary in the National Portrait Gallery.

The picture must, I think, have been begun as early as June or July, for Francis was in France with his father throughout August, and Mary Lamb's sittings came to an end in November ; we learn from Crabb Robinson's diary that she was ill again by the 18th.

Six weeks more, and we take our leave of the most lovable of Cary's friends. The last of all Lamb's letters not inappropriately epitomises his love of good reading and of good feeding, and his friendship for Cary. It is a note to Mrs. Dyer, a worthy woman though "not literate," who had married Lamb's George Dyer to look after him :

Dec. 22nd, 1834.

Dear Mrs. Dyer,—I am very uneasy about a *Book* which I either have lost or left at your house on Thursday. It was the book I went out to fetch from Miss Buffam's, while the tripe was frying. It is called Phillip's Theatrum Poetarum ; but it is an English book. I think I left it in the parlour. It is Mr. Cary's book, and I would not lose it for the world. Pray, if you find it, book it at the Swan, Snow Hill, by an Edmonton stage immediately, directed to Mr. Lamb, Church Street, Edmonton, or write to say you cannot find it. I am quite anxious about it. If it is lost, I shall never like tripe again.

With kindest love to Mr. Dyer and all,

Yours truly,
C. LAMB.

Cary's book was a biographical dictionary of poets, by Edward Phillips, the nephew of Milton, who is said to have helped him with the work. It was not lost, but as we shall see was duly returned to the owner.

Robinson's. Though, as Francis Cary states here, the picture was not quite finished when Lamb died, it was not altered afterwards, and there is no reason for doubting that it is a fair likeness of both brother and sister as they were in 1834.

Lamb, alas, was to enjoy no more tripe fried by the excellent Mrs. Dyer. On the very morning he wrote this letter he had a fall, and a slight scratch brought on erysipelas; five days later, says Talfourd, "he sank into death as placidly as into sleep." His sister mercifully was in no condition to realise her loss, and when she recovered her sanity, six or seven weeks later, she bore it, according to Crabb Robinson, with "unexpected composure." Cary had intended to be at the funeral, but for some reason was unable to go after all.[1] Moxon, Talfourd, Ryle, Hood, and Allsop were the only friends present.

Lamb had once said to his sister, in his usual tone of mingled tenderness and abruptness, "You must die first, Mary," and she had assented; but it was not to be, and she outlived him by more than twelve years. Yet except for this (and Mary was well provided for), we cannot feel that he died before his time. Life had become a heavy burden, and he was ready to rest. Few men have been so loved, and none better commemorated. Procter, Moxon, and several others wrote well of him in prose, and the poems to his memory by Wordsworth and Landor are among their finest. Cary's tribute too deserves to be remembered. The book for which Lamb had enquired so anxiously was found by Moxon and returned to the owner, with the leaf folded down at the account of Sir Philip Sidney, whose sonnets Lamb had stoutly vindicated, against the prejudice of Hazlitt, as far back as 1823. Cary thereupon wrote the poem which of all his original verses it is pleasantest to remember:

[1] A letter from Talfourd to Crabb Robinson, dated Dec. 31, 1834, and Robinson's diary for Jan. 7, 1835 ("I now regret that I did not attend Lamb's funeral. Neither Barry Cornwall [Proctor] nor Cary was there") are positive on this point. Mr. Lucas errs by following Sadler's edition of Crabb Robinson, which garbles the first and omits the second.

LINES TO THE MEMORY OF CHARLES LAMB.

So should it be, my gentle friend ;
Thy leaf last closed at Sydney's end.
Thou too, like Sydney, wouldst have given
The water, thirsting and near heaven ;
Nay were it wine, fill'd to the brim,
Thou hadst look'd hard, but given, like him.

And art thou mingled then among
Those famous sons of ancient song ?
And do they gather round, and praise
Thy relish of their nobler lays ?
Waxing in mirth to hear thee tell
With what strange mortals thou didst dwell !
At thy quaint sallies more delighted,
Than any's long among them lighted !

'Tis done : and thou hast join'd a crew
To whom thy soul was justly due ;
And yet I think, where'er thou be,
They'll scarcely love thee more than we.

These lines cannot, of course, rival the clarity and tenderness of Landor's address *To the Sister of Charles Lamb*, or the wonderful intensity of Wordsworth's later poem on the death of the Ettrick Shepherd, in which Lamb and Coleridge are linked for all time in a single stanza. Yet Cary's verses have a touch of the true Elian humour, and we cannot help fancying that Lamb would have liked the fifth and sixth lines better than anything in Wordsworth's deeply-felt but rather too moralistic poem *Written after the Death of Charles Lamb.*

It was Wordsworth who, not unnaturally, was first asked to compose the epitaph for Lamb's tombstone in Edmonton churchyard. The poem just mentioned was his response ; but it would have required a slab twenty or thirty yards long to accommodate it, and as the poet freely admitted was quite unsuitable for an outdoor inscription in our English climate. In the event Cary's epitaph, composed probably early in 1836, was chosen instead. This is hardly so good as the earlier poem already quoted, which was scarcely suitable, though I do not think Lamb would have minded at all if they had used it. It is unfortunate that in English we have many good elegies which are unsuitable for epitaphs, and very few good epitaphs which are also completely successful as poems. Still, Cary's lines (which, thanks to the care of Lamb's later admirers, may be read to-day in Edmonton churchyard) are sincere and not unworthy of the theme :

Farewell, dear friend ; that smile, that harmless mirth,
No more shall gladden our domestic hearth ;
That rising tear, with pain forbid to flow,
Better than words, no more assuage our woe ;
That hand outstretch'd, from small but well-earned store,
Yield succour to the destitute no more :
Yet art thou not all lost ; thro' many an age,
With sterling sense and humour shall thy page
Win many an English bosom, pleased to see
That old and happier vein revived in thee.
This for our earth ; and if with friends we share
Our joys in heaven, we hope to meet thee there.

On epitaphs, in the vernacular at any rate, the unlearned have perhaps as good a right to speak as the critics. Here is an unprejudiced opinion from one of the former, recorded

by James Thorne, the antiquarian, in his *Rambles by Rivers* :[1]

We heard a piece of criticism on this inscription that Lamb would have enjoyed. As we were copying it, a couple of casual excavators came across the churchyard, and read it over with great deliberation ; when they had finished, one of them said, " A very fair bit of poetry that " ; " Yes," replied his companion, " I'm blest if it isn't as good a bit as any in the churchyard ; rather too long, though."

One wonders what they would have said to Wordsworth's poem, of which the first section alone ran to three times the length.

[1] First Series, 1844, p. 190 ; quoted in *Notes and Queries*, Series 1, vol. iii, p. 379. In the same journal there was a long correspondence on the authorship of the epitaph, which was attributed by various readers to Wordsworth and to Talfourd ; but there is no reason for doubting Cary's authorship, which is asserted in the *Memoir*, and confirmed by Crabb Robinson's diary. Dykes Campbell settled the question (*Notes and Queries*, Series 7, vol. iv, p. 393).

CHAPTER 8. ENDINGS (1834—1844)

With the deaths of Lamb and Coleridge, following so soon after the loss of his wife, Cary's best days may be said to end. Darley was now the only intimate friend whom he saw at all frequently, and his last years were saddened by the unfortunate circumstances of his retirement from the British Museum. Yet through all his troubles his faculties remained remarkably keen right up to his death, and during the last half-dozen years of his life he got through an amount of literary work, in revising the Dante and in other enterprises as well, which might have taxed the energies of a man half his age.

The year following Lamb's death was not a prosperous one in the matter of health. In August, 1835, Cary, accompanied by Francis, set out on a month's tour in Germany, taking letters of introduction from Crabb Robinson to two eminent Germans, Ludwig Tieck, the pioneer of Romanticism in German literature, and Karl August Böttiger, an archæologist of repute. Cary went up the Rhine to Mainz, and from there to Leipzig and Dresden ; but on September 1, a few hours after calling on Tieck, he was suddenly taken ill and had to return immediately to England. It is not quite clear whether the trouble was a revival of his mental complaint, but the guarded account in the *Memoir* renders this probable. The incident is wrapped in obscurity, and all we can say is that Cary was well enough to resume his Museum duties in the autumn only a fortnight

after the normal date. This was his last serious illness until shortly before his death nine years later.

During the next two years we have little news apart from what may be gleaned from some of Darley's letters to Cary. The poet's foreign travels seem to have lasted pretty continuously from 1830 to 1835; but he was in London for a short time towards the end of 1833, as we learn from a characteristic note of December 1, asking Cary to dine with him at the Parthenon Club: "I have striven, but in vain, to bring myself up to the visiting point —so will you come and take an oyster with me here?" In the autumn of 1834 the friends missed meeting in Paris by only a few weeks. Cary stayed there for a day or two only, on his way back from the Auvergne at the end of August; Francis however remained for some weeks to copy pictures in the Louvre, and met Darley in October. Through Francis, Darley sent Cary one of his long nonsensical letters, full of chaff, and winding up with: "You told me, when last we met, that I might write to you if I had 'anything worth communicating,' but not else—I hope the interesting contents of my letter will repay your perusal." Perhaps some of the "interesting contents" may be not unamusing as a specimen of Darley's fooling in prose:

Paris, Octr., 1834.

My dear Danteggio,—As I know you are newsmonger enough to like hearing from a friend, when it costs you *no postage*, I scratch you off a little fiddlefaddle to your taste by Francis. Just arrived at Paris from a tour thro' the Netherlands. At Antwerp the whole political world was in commotion with a report that the second cousin of the Empress of Russia's head footman had come on a special visit to the Queen of Holland's favorite maid of honor. King Leo by the way (but let this be a secret) is suspected to have

pawned his crown to some French jeweller and to wear paste. . . .

As for the winter fashions here, claret frocks seem to be quite out—a lightish pea-green (which by the by would suit your complexion admirably) promise to be most in vogue. Waistcoats broad-striped red and blue, cut bias-wise. Pantaloons (trousers are exploded) made very tight to the shape, ending just at the fall of your calf, with stockings to match, and shoes very low in the quarters, so that the point of your great toe alone should be covered. Hat worn very much on the side of the head, rather over your left eye. . . . No posies in the buttonhole—mark that Signor Danteggio. . . . My next letter (post free) shall contain the Fashions for Ladies.

So you have published a new version of Peter Pindar! Well, I always thought this would be a work well suited to your genius, and only supposed you were bought off by the [government[1]] from undertaking it. Illustrated by Cruikshank of course—you and he could not do without each other. I have done nothing but complete my literal translation of Virgil which gave you such a fit of the jaundice. How your *occhi di bragia* will glare when you see it hot pressed, from the Albemarle Street literary oven, in quarto!

"Peter Pindar" was of course the Rev. John Wolcot, the vulgar satirist who was in fact bribed with a pension to spare certain members of the Royal Family; he had a fight with Gifford in a shop in Piccadilly, and altogether he was a very different sort of poet from Cary's Pindar and a very different sort of Reverend from Cary himself. The translation of Virgil which Darley pretends is to be published by Murray does not seem to be itself entirely an invention; in a number of later notes there are allusions suggesting

[1] This is left blank in the original; but "government" or "royal family" is clearly intended, as explained below.

that Darley did translations from Latin and Greek, and took them to his friend for criticism and correction. I do not think Cary can have been a very severe critic, but none of these exercises (and perhaps they were no more) seem to have been published.

As this letter shows, there was something of the mischievous schoolboy about the younger man's playful manner with Cary. In inventing absurd nicknames Darley rivalled Lamb. He calls Cary indifferently "Dante," "Receptacle of the Soul of Dante," "Pindar," and even "Reverend Filch"—this last in a note which has a postscript: "I miss a pockethandkerchief since last Sunday. Is this the way you reimburse yourself for hospitality?" For himself he invents a number of pseudonyms mostly in allusion to his severity as a critic, which, though it does not seem to have troubled Taylor in the *London Magazine* days, was the despair of Chorley, the editor of the *Athenæum*. The letter from Paris quoted above is signed "Scarmiglione," the name of one of Dante's devils, and signifying, neatly enough, "one eager to tumble or dishevel persons and things." In like vein are "Malleus Ignorantium," "Depôt of the Spirit of Zoilus," and "Doctor doctissimus Darley," signatures to notes mostly serious enough otherwise, and dealing, many of them, in learned fashion with points in the revision of Cary's Dante.

Darley's first business on his resettlement in London in 1835 was the private printing of his *Nepenthe*, that queer, intoxicated poem which paints (in its author's words) "the ill-effects of over-joy" and of "excessive melancholy." The book was as strange-looking as its contents were puzzling; the covers were too small, and the paper, says Miss Mitford, resembled "that in which a country shopkeeper puts up his tea." The poem was sent to her with

one of the long, rhapsodical and egoistic epistles which Darley reserved for friends whom he was too shy to meet. Poor Miss Mitford found it all very mystifying, and had to ask the poet to "explain his explanation." For Cary, who was more fortunate in being able to get the author's elucidations direct, a much shorter letter sufficed :

[*Endorsed by Cary ;* 1835.]

My dear Pindar,—I send you what there is printed of my Nepenthe, as there is little probability of the poem being finished. You will see that it is done at my own expence—no publisher would have undertaken it—and a very few copies are sufficient for all my readers.

Yours ever most truly

GEORGE DARLEY

Perhaps you will send the other copy to Procter, as I do not know where he is to be found ?—and you'll oblige me.

Another note belonging to this year (October 23) gives us news, in a postcript, of Miss Lamb (the letter itself is about certain passages in the *Inferno*) : "Miss Lamb spent a day at Moxon's, and is sufficiently well. Moxon says he thinks you might go to see her at Enfield. She has left his house for her own." Darley must have meant to write "Edmonton," for Miss Lamb was never at Enfield after her brother's death. She remained with the Waldens for six or seven years, and her only excursions were occasional visits to Mr. and Mrs. Moxon at Dover Street. We do not know whether Cary went down to Edmonton on receiving this news from Darley, but a few weeks later Miss Lamb was again at the Moxons', and Cary was present at a small gathering of her old friends. Crabb Robinson writes (December 3) :

Went in the evening to Moxon's. With him was Miss Lamb. She was very comfortable—not in high spirits, but calm, and she seemed to enjoy the sight of so many old friends. There were Cary, Allsop, and Miss James. No direct talk about her brother. Wordsworth's epitaph she disapproves ; she does not like any allusion to his being a clerk, or to family misfortunes. This is very natural ; not even dear Mary can overcome the common feeling that would conceal lowness of station, or a reference to ignoble sufferings.

We now approach the difficult and somewhat unpleasant business of Cary's resignation from the Museum in 1837. It will be necessary, in order to do justice to all concerned, to say something first of Cary's relations with his younger colleague Panizzi, the brilliant Italian scholar, who was rising into prominence about the time of Charles Lamb's death.

Antonio Panizzi, like Ugo Foscolo and Gabriele Rossetti, was a refugee from the vindictiveness of the alien rulers of his country. Born in 1797 at Brescello in the Duchy of Modena, he took part in an abortive rising of the Carbonari in 1820, and escaping from prison, fled to Switzerland, and finally, in 1823, to England. The first few years in England were spent at Liverpool, where he was befriended by William Roscoe, the Italian scholar, and the Rev. William Shepherd, a Nonconformist minister who had some influence with Lord Brougham, the Radical politician. Panizzi earned a living, at first none too easily, by teaching his native language. In 1828 he moved to London and became a protégé of Brougham. A man of unbounded energy and ambition, Panizzi soon began to make his presence felt. In several scathing reviews

he exposed the fallacies of Rossetti's theories concerning Dante; and the two Italians also found themselves rivals for the Professorship of Italian at the new University College in 1828. Among Rossetti's supporters was Cary, but Panizzi, largely through Brougham's influence, gained the post.[1] Three years later the same useful friend recommended Panizzi to the trustees of the British Museum, and he was appointed an "extra Assistant Librarian" in succession to Walter, thus becoming Cary's immediate junior in the library.

The early relations between Cary and Panizzi seem to have been very friendly, though without anything approaching intimacy; their common enthusiasm for Italian literature, however, was a bond of sympathy. Bibliography and librarianship were already becoming Panizzi's ruling passions, but between 1830 and 1834 he found time also to bring out an admirable edition of Boiardo and Ariosto. Through Panizzi Cary made the acquaintance of Shepherd, who was himself an Italian scholar in a small way, and who became a great admirer of Cary's translations from Italian and Greek.[2] Panizzi very soon realised that his prospects of advancement in the Museum depended mainly on what might happen to Cary during the next few years; for it was evident that Cary's immediate senior, Baber, who had been

[1] See G. Festing, *J. Hookham Frere and His Friends* (1899), p. 304. As we have seen in chapter v, Rossetti obtained the corresponding post at King's College a few years later.

[2] Shepherd's character was sketched in not very flattering terms by De Quincey in his "Literary and Lake Reminiscences" (*Tait's Magazine*, Feb., 1837; *Works*, ed. Masson, 1889, ii, p. 128). De Quincey says he was "a buffoon" who told coarse stories and ran down the English Church bishops; but he admits also that Shepherd was "a truly upright man." No doubt it is evidence of character that in his letters to Panizzi Shepherd twice mentions his amusement at Cary's adroit rendering of the last line in canto xxi of the *Inferno*.

Keeper of the Printed Books since 1812, would be retiring before very long. The ambitious Panizzi therefore enlisted the aid of Shepherd, who as an active Radical and a prominent citizen of Liverpool was reputed to have a good deal of influence with the Reform party.

The precise nature of the plan for securing Panizzi's promotion by providing for Cary outside the Museum is not perfectly clear, and we learn of it only from Shepherd's letters to the junior librarian. Still, the general intention is plain enough, as a few extracts will show. On March 17, 1832, Shepherd writes enquiring for Cary's *Birds*, and after praising his Dante adds : " Give my best compliments to the excellent gentleman ; and tell him if I had the interest with the Chancellor [Brougham] which with many I have the credit for, I would get him made a golden prebend." On April 4 he writes again : " I wish I could clap a mitre on Mr. Cary's head. The Reform bill is worked through, and the Minister's story is 'a twelvemonth hence I should think it practicable to get the Lord Chancellor ear-wigged about a good living.' " Four months later he sends a letter which we must quote more fully :

Gateacre, July 25, 1832.

My dear Sir,—You are quite right in your conjecture. I certainly some time since *earwigged* the Lord Chancellor on behalf of Mr. Cary. I wrote to him from Herefordshire, stating that I had been reading the Divina Commedia with the aid of Cary's translation, and intimated my opinion that as his Lordship was patronising a new version [this was I. C. Wright's *Inferno*, 1833, dedicated to Brougham], he ought to patronise the author of the old one (whom I lauded as he deserves) by presenting him to a living worth his acceptance should an opportunity of so doing occur while his Lordship held the seals. This is the only applica-

tion of the kind which I have made to the Chancellor, who has evidently attended to it so far as to have Mr. Cary in his mind, and this is a great point gained.

Your project seems to me very feasible, though there is some complexity in it. But if Mr. Baber and Mr. Cary draw together the arrangement may surely be effected, if Lord Holland and perhaps Lord Dacre can be induced to further it. No time is to be lost, as ministerial permanency is under the new order of things not to be relied on. In moving the mind of Lord Brougham I have done all I can in the business—I did not intend that Mr. Cary should know of my writing to the great man, lest my interference should end in no fruits : but perhaps to encourage him to proceed, he may be informed of it. This I leave to your discretion. . . . . Remember me to Cary and believe me

Yrs. truly,

WILL. SHEPHERD.

The part to be played by Baber and Lords Holland and Dacre (both members of the first Reform Ministry) is obscure ; but perhaps the idea was that Cary should have the comfortable living in Cambridgeshire which Baber held together with his Museum post, and that something bigger still should be found for the Keeper of the Printed Books when he should choose to retire. Whatever the plan was, it came to nothing, and we hear no more of it,[1] though Shepherd continued to send cordial messages to Cary through Panizzi until as late as 1836. No further attempts seem to have been made, and the inevitable issue was the unfortunate incident in 1837 which led to Cary's voluntary resignation.

During the intervening years Panizzi's prospects had, on the whole, been steadily improving. His work in catalogu-

[1] Cary probably had the failure of this project in mind when he wrote the passage about his having neglected " the arts by which Churchmen often rise " in his letter to Clare of Oct. 20, 1832, which has been quoted in Chapter v (*supra*, p. 142).

ing the French Revolution tracts was of the first quality, and he undertook voluntarily a series of elaborate researches into the organisation of the Museum library which earned him high praise. At the Parliamentary Enquiry of 1835 he was able, in company with his superior Baber, to urge in unanswerable terms the claims of the library to more generous grants from the Exchequer. A proposal at this Enquiry to raise his salary in recognition of his services was only defeated by the influence of his enemies, of whom he had already contrived to make a number within the walls of the Museum itself. Madden and Forshall in particular remained implacable foes to the end of their lives. Their hostility was in part mere prejudice, unworthy and even absurd in men of culture, against "the foreigner," as they called him; but it is also plain enough that conciliation was not prominent among Panizzi's personal gifts, and that his manners were inclined to be overbearing in the face of even slight opposition.

In the Enquiry of 1835 Cary, owing to the state of his health, played a very small part; and when, early in 1837, the question arose who was to be the new Keeper of the Printed Books, it must have been evident to most of the Museum officials that the appointment would cause some trouble. In March of this year Baber formally announced his intention of resigning his post in June. Panizzi thereupon wrote to the trustees asking them in general terms to bear in mind his services should any appointment be made. Cary's action was more definite, and it is clear that he fully expected, according to the normal procedure, to receive the appointment as the next in seniority. He applied at once to the influential Rogers, who (we learn from his own account of the matter) wrote a letter of recommendation for Cary to Howley, the Archbishop of Canterbury and chief trustee of

the Museum. But Howley, though an old friend of Cary, did not feel quite easy in sanctioning his appointment. Cary's advanced age, and the mental trouble from which he had lately suffered, seemed to render him unfit to take charge of the library during a period which, it was clear, would be one of great changes and of corresponding difficulty. He wrote Rogers to this effect, and the poet immediately agreed to withdraw his recommendation : " I also," he states, " as delicately as I could, touched on the subject to Cary himself, telling him that the place was not suited for him." Nevertheless, when Baber's resignation took effect, Cary persisted in his application. What precisely happened is a little obscure. Edwards, the historian of the British Museum, says that Cary was informed by the Archbishop that there were objections to his being appointed, and on his return to the Museum told Panizzi what had passed. The junior then, in Cary's presence, wrote a letter to the Archbishop asking for the place for himself, and obtained Cary's approval of the terms in which it was written before sending it. Other accounts, however, do not support Edwards's view that Cary at first gave up hope and later changed his mind. On the contrary, we can best explain his assent to Panizzi's application on the assumption that he felt so confident of obtaining the post as to be quite willing to admit a rival candidature.

This, at any rate, is the most natural explanation of Cary's next action, which we may give in his own words in the letter afterwards printed in the *Times :*

> Lest I should deceive myself as to the present state of my health, I thought it right to consult three medical men, who best knew the ailments I had been subject to. Their opinions I immediately laid before the Archbishop. . . . They were unanimous as to my fitness in point of health for the place I solicited.

Howley, who was naturally very well disposed towards Cary, was satisfied with this, at once changed his attitude, and exerted every effort to get him the appointment. But he was too late. The other trustees—the Lord Chancellor (the Earl of Cottenham) and the Speaker of the House of Commons (Abercromby)—had decided for Panizzi, and refused to budge. Crabb Robinson, who seems to have got his information direct from Panizzi, gives an account of the matter which throws a curious light on the methods to which even Archbishops can resort on occasion :

(August 27, 1837) . . . The Archbishop endeavoured to stop the appointment by postponing the appointment [sic] till after the dissolution of Parliament, when the Speaker would have lost his place and he could neutralise the Chancellor. This trick was provided for, and therefore the Chancellor and Speaker executed on a stamp the appointment of Panizzi the day before the dissolution, which the Archbishop afterwards signed for conformity.

Parliament was dissolved, three weeks after the death of King William IV, on July 10 ; by the 15th the Archbishop had reluctantly accepted the inevitable, and Panizzi became Keeper of the Printed Books.

Cary was astonished and indignant at being passed over, and in an open letter to the Lord Chancellor, printed in the *Times* of July 18, he permitted himself a warmth and even an intemperance of language which we cannot but regret. He accused the Chancellor and the Speaker of wantonly overriding the decision of the only trustee " who regularly inspects the minutes of the establishment, and is at all likely to have an intimate and exact knowledge of its concerns " ; and he demanded a public enquiry into their action. His anger has at least this excuse, that the Archbishop was in fact the most active of the trustees, and his opinion would,

as a rule, be the most trustworthy. But in this particular case the other trustees seem to have made at least some special enquiries ; there is no doubt that they acted in perfect good faith ; and they happened, as the event showed, to be right.

One especially unfortunate sentence in Cary's letter of protest requires comment before we have done with this uncomfortable business. Answering the objection to his appointment on the score of age, he says : " My age, between sixty-four and sixty-five years, it was plain, might rather ask for me that alleviation of labour which . . . is gained by promotion to a senior place, than call for a continuance of the same laborious employment." It would be cruel to smile at this ; but it certainly throws into prominence the contrast between Cary's conception of a senior librarian's duties and that which Panizzi's later conduct revealed. Yet Panizzi's was then a novel, almost a revolutionary, view ; and in great part it accounts for his unpopularity, as Keeper of the Printed Books, with the Keepers of other departments who held more comfortably conservative opinions. Cary's queer argument states only too honestly what had been the practice if not the theory at the Museum. There was no provision for superannuation allowances, and in the absence of private means even the highest officials (two successive Principal Librarians, Planta and Ellis, are instances) had to remain at their post far beyond what would now be the retiring age. Cary's was a case of a similar kind, except that to retain his position as Assistant Librarian after the appointment of Panizzi would have been intolerable. His demand for a public enquiry being, of course, ignored, he determined to sacrifice comfort to what he thought his honour required. His formal report to the trustees dated October 12, 1837, closes with the following words :

Mr. Cary takes the first opportunity of a regular meeting of the Trustees respectfully to state to them, that, under the present circumstances of his situation in the Museum, he feels he cannot continue to hold his office with satisfaction and credit to himself, and he therefore desires to resign it as soon as he can do so with convenience to his department.

At Christmas, says Edwards, "Cary left the Museum with the hearty respect and with the brotherly regrets of all his colleagues, without any exception. Of him it may truly be said, he was a man much beloved."

That Panizzi, in the event, more than justified his appointment, is now matter of history. "No appointment," says Edwards, "was ever made during the whole of the hundred and fifteen years which have elapsed betwixt the first organisation of the establishment in 1755 and the year in which I write (1870) that has had such large influence upon its growth and its improvement." Panizzi, in fact, was the Napoleon of the new era in the history of our national library. In the teeth of bitter opposition and ungenerous prejudice he succeeded in carrying out most of the extensive reforms which he advocated. In 1845 he obtained a special grant of £10,000 for the library, and the Royal Commission of 1848-50 completely disposed of his critics and vindicated his policy. He became Principal Librarian in 1856, designed the new Reading Room which was opened in the next year, and retired in 1866 on his full salary. He died in 1879, a K.C.B. and a man of mark in international politics. His career, contrasted with Cary's, might furnish a curious object-lesson on the qualities needed for public success in addition to learning and high talents; but we must not enlarge on this. There is a touch of ironic fitness in the present situation of the busts of these rivals, who (we may surely suppose) have long since amicably

composed their differences. Panizzi guards the entrance to the highly efficient but slightly inhuman Reading Room of which he was the creator ; Cary contemplates the milder shades of the North Library.

Bitter as was the disappointment which Cary had suffered, his departure from the Museum was in the long run a blessing. Even his son Henry (whose account of the matter is otherwise not very satisfactory) admits this : " I believe," he writes, " that his freedom from a regular and laborious employment, in the end, tended very much to his own comfort and happiness." The most pressing difficulty, of course, was financial ; but this was not so serious as might be expected. Though the tardy grant of a Civil List pension came (in 1841) too late to make any essential difference, Cary was secured against want by the fairly substantial sum (about £6,000) which he had inherited in 1834 on the death of his father. Most of his sons, too, were now grown men well started in their chosen careers ; and they were both able and willing to repay him for the pains he had expended on their upbringing. With Francis, who was now an artist of some repute, or with Henry, who had recently abandoned the law for the Church, much of Cary's time was passed during his last years. On leaving the Museum he rented a house in Park Street, Westminster, where he lived with his younger sons, Francis and Richard, for the next four or five years.

Cary's first thoughts, when he found himself once more at liberty to choose his course of study, turned to the history of Italian poetry which he had long wished to write. But it was now too late. His knowledge and his critical powers would have been quite equal to the task, but physically he was not fit for the long and continuous labour which so

ambitious a work would demand. He made a start on the plan, collected a good many notes, and translated a few specimens; but the "remains" which his son was able to put into shape and publish were very slender.[1] The cherished project, though not entirely abandoned till later, was laid aside in 1838, when a London publisher, William Smith, approached Cary with a proposal which seemed likely to prove more immediately profitable. This was the editing of a series of standard English poets in a cheap form. Three or four years were given to this somewhat uninspiring but also not very exacting occupation, and complete editions of Milton, Dryden, Pope, Thomson, Young, and Cowper were published with introductions by Cary. We have already referred to the critical remarks written for these and other projected editions which did not see the light. The sale does not seem to have been very encouraging, but this was certainly not due to any defect in Cary's part of the work; the text of two at least of his editions (Pope and Cowper) was reissued several times by other publishers, and Southey, in his own edition of Cowper, did not disdain to take a hint from Cary, duly repaying the debt with a high compliment.[2]

[1] Henry Cary says he found the work "in a state of such little forwardness that the materials that are left can scarcely be put into shape, and published as his." He put together six brief articles, printed in the *Gentleman's Magazine* (Nov., 1846—March, 1847), containing scraps translated from Pulci, Parini and other poets; but after what has been said in chapter vi these scarcely call for separate consideration.

[2] Southey followed Cary in reprinting Cowper's Homer in its first and not in its revised form: "Mr. Cary's authority upon such a question is of especial weight, the translator of Dante being the only one of our countrymen who has ever executed a translation of equal magnitude and not less difficulty with the same perfect fidelity and admirable skill."—(*Works of Cowper*, ed. R. Southey, 15 vols., 1835-7, vol. xi, p. xxxiv.) Cary's Pope appeared in 1839 (reissued 1853, 1883); his Cowper also in 1839 (reissued 1851, 1875); the Milton, Thomson, and Young were issued together in 1841. The Dryden I have not traced, and perhaps Henry Cary was mistaken about it.

During these years Cary lived very quietly, seeing few friends and only occasionally dining out or entertaining guests himself. Carlyle, whom he knew through Darley, dined once or twice with Cary, but the most frequent visitor was Darley himself, as we learn from a number of hasty notes. "I am afraid to go before your father, not having *done my Theocritus*," he writes to Francis about 1839, referring to his exercises in translation; and again in February, 1844, this time to Cary himself: "after dinner to-morrow I hope you will illuminate me a little more on the claims of Euripides and Sophocles." Several times between 1841 and his death Cary exerted himself in support of Darley's efforts to gain election to the Athenæum, though they do not seem to have been successful. In return Darley, and through him Carlyle, gave substantial help in the revision of the Dante. Cary was spending some time on this even before 1842, in which year he began to concentrate his energies on completing the definitive edition. A note from Darley, written from the Clarence Club on February 21, 1842, shows that some progress had been made by then: "Dear Cary," it begins, "I leave you the first volume of your Dante, with my pencil notes written over again in ink that you may read them more easily, as they are of little consequence. Carlyle's notes being of much more, I have marked these with T. C." The remainder discusses the well-known painting (in the Duomo at Florence) of Dante among his "tre regni." Darley advances some arguments against attributing this picture to Giotto. He mentions Orcagna as a rival claimant, but recent authorities usually ascribe it to Domenico di Michelino.

We hear also, through Crabb Robinson, of Cary's occasional visits to Moxon, from whom he would get news of Mary Lamb; but until the last year or two not many

details are available concerning Cary's life in London after the Museum days. Rather more, however, is known of his activities during the summer months, which he spent regularly in the Oxford district from 1838 onwards. His son Henry, after his ordination, became curate first at St. Mary's, Reading (in 1835), and later at Temple Cowley and at Iffley. It was at the last two places, villages within a short distance of Oxford, that Cary stayed with his son's family, "enjoying pleasant walks and drives in the villages about," as he wrote to Digby, and strolling in to Oxford every morning to read or write in the Bodleian or at All Souls', where he was provided with a private room by the courtesy of the Warden, the Rev. Lewis Sneyd. The library of All Souls' was, then at any rate, richer in Italian literature than any other college library in Oxford, and Cary spent much time in reading and translating his favourite poets.

Not many miles from Oxford, in a cottage at Three Mile Cross, near Reading, lived the kindly and industrious authoress of *Our Village*. Henry Cary had become intimate with Miss Mitford during his stay at Reading, and after his removal to Temple Cowley there was frequent intercourse between the two households. "Old Mr. Cary," writes Miss Mitford from her cottage in 1840, "came here last year just after seeing Cowper's garden room, and described it as inconceivably small." No doubt Cary, in preparing his edition of Cowper, had paid a visit to Olney to verify the poet's own description of the famous summer-house as "not much bigger than a sedan chair." Miss Mitford mentions another visit from Cary in 1842, when Hayley was one of the topics of conversation.

Miss Mitford, gentlest and friendliest of bluestockings, was visited in her charming little cottage by nearly every eminent author of her time; and in the surrounding district

she had a wide and varied circle of acquaintances. Among those whom Cary would probably meet at Three Mile Cross were two young Anglican clergymen who later became famous as Canon Kingsley and Cardinal Newman. The great controversy which produced the *Apologia Pro Vita Sua* was nearly twenty years ahead, but the two men were already setting out on their widely diverging paths. Newman, who had been vicar of St. Mary's, Oxford, for some years, was approaching the mental crisis which led to his secession from the Anglican Church; while Kingsley, who in 1842 was a curate at Eversley, just over the Hampshire border, was busying himself in encouraging Sunday cricket. Whether Cary knew Kingsley, with whose views he would feel some sympathy, is not clear; but with Newman he was certainly well acquainted. His son and host, Henry Cary, who had already dabbled a little in theological pamphleteering (on the Apostolic Succession), was a great admirer of Newman during the St. Mary's period. Miss Mitford writes in August, 1841: "My friends the Carys (son and daughter-in-law of the translator of Dante) are very intimate with Mr. Newman and very fond of him. His power in Oxford is extraordinary." She adds an impressive proof of the last statement: "You can't go into any of the halls on a fast day of the Church without seeing four or five young men dining upon bread and water." Cary no doubt heard some of Newman's wonderful sermons at St. Mary's; but if his lifelong study of Dante had not disturbed his sturdy Low Church views it was not likely, at this time of day, that even the eloquence of Newman would shake him. He had little sympathy with the heroes of the Oxford Movement, though he shows his usual kindliness in his references to them. In a letter of September 5, 1843 (evidently with Newman in mind), he says:

At this time a leaning to some of the errors of the Church of Rome is but too apparent. In saying this, I do not mean to reflect on the motives and intentions of any. When a mind like Dante's, so vigorous and so impatient of any authority except that of truth, continued in some points still so enthralled, can we wonder that others should fall under the same delusions, even after all the efforts that have been made to undeceive them ?

Cary saw the way things were going plainly enough ; but he did not live to hear of the reception of Newman into the Catholic Church two years after this letter was written—an event which no doubt brought as one of its minor results the end of the intimacy between the future cardinal and Henry Cary, who prudently remained within the Anglican fold.

We now retrace our steps a little to tell the somewhat curious story of Cary's Civil List pension. It was to his old acquaintance Rogers that he owed this benefit. Cary had been deeply offended by Rogers's action in the matter of the Museum appointment, and never afterwards visited him. But Rogers had had enough experience to know that the benefactor must often submit to be misunderstood even by those for whom he labours ; and he did not allow the estrangement to slacken his efforts on Cary's behalf. Early in 1838 he persuaded the Lord Chancellor and the Speaker to concur with their fellow-trustee, the Archbishop, in recommending Cary to the Government for a pension. Politicians are seldom in a hurry over such matters, and nothing had been done by August, when Rogers wrote to Lord Melbourne, the Prime Minister, to refresh his memory :

I am sure you mean to do something. But at [Cary's] age every month is a loss, and the time will come, for I know

enough of you to know it—when you will be sorry to have overlooked him. With his translation of Dante you cannot be unacquainted, and perhaps you have looked into his translation of Pindar. Of his genius and his learning there can be no doubt. I can speak from long knowledge of his other merits—for long have I experienced his friendship, though for some time in poverty and in spleen he has withdrawn himself from me.

But perhaps you have done it already ; and if so, I envy you.[1]

Yet still nothing was done. Unfortunately for Cary, the Prime Minister was at this time particularly worried by the state of affairs in Canada, and had no time to spare for smaller matters. In consequence, Lord Holland and other members of the Government having expressed some annoyance at Cary's letter to the *Times* on the Panizzi affair, the question of a pension was shelved. A few months later Cary, whose honesty was so often his own greatest enemy, made matters worse by a slightly indiscreet expression in the public press of his opinion on the Canada question.

A year or so before, disaffection in Canada, which had been simmering for some time, had broken out in an active revolt against the English Government. This was suppressed without much difficulty, but it led to the well-known mission of Lord Durham, one of the ablest members of Melbourne's ministry, who was sent out in the spring of 1838 to investigate the real state of affairs. His conduct, it is now generally agreed, was courageous and far-sighted, and his *Report on the Affairs of British North America* (1839), which recommended the granting of self-government to the Canadian colonies, is one of the great documents in the history of

[1] P. W. Clayden, *Rogers and His Contemporaries* (1889), ii, p. 172. Rogers's second letter, quoted below, is in the *Memoir* of Cary.

British Imperial government. But Durham suffered severely for his virtues. In August, 1838, during his absence, Brougham, his personal enemy, found a pretext for attacking his policy and his character in the House of Lords. The ultra-Tories and the extreme Radicals formed an unnatural alliance, and forced Melbourne to repudiate Durham's ordinances and recall him to England. He returned in disgrace, and died a year or two later—"of a broken heart," said Lord Broughton.[1]

Cary, like many men of moderate opinions, was wholeheartedly in favour of Lord Durham, and indignant at the pusillanimity of Melbourne and his colleagues. So strong were his feelings that, for the first time since the *Ode to Kosciusko*, he declared his political views in public. In the *Examiner* for November 25, 1838, appeared this sonnet :

DURHAM, there are who blame thy hardihood
Unfolding past misgovernment to view,
Branding thy rabid foe with stigma due
To treacherous wiles, and shaming the false blood
Of friends, that weakly his blind fang withstood.
Not so thy Country. Thee she bids pursue
Thy homeward way in peace ; of courtly crew
Careless alike, and faction's aspic brood.
Come then ; and thy proud course in triumph keep
Through angry billows trembling as they roar :
Freedom's pure gales, that from Colombia sweep,
With kindred breath shall urge thy hastening prore,
A queenly planet smile upon the deep,
And Britain's Pharos light thee to the shore.

H. F. CARY. Nov. 13, 1838.

[1] *Recollections of a Long Life* (6 vols., 1911), v, p. 164 : "His disappointment in Canada had killed him," he adds. 20,000 persons attended the funeral.

The opening lines, which are perhaps a little obscure, refer to Durham's bold action in "shaming the false blood of friends," that is (more particularly), to the proclamation issued shortly before his departure from Canada, in which he complained of "incessant criticism" from the home Government, and replied to the personal attack of Brougham, who of course is the "rabid foe" of Cary's sonnet.

Lord Melbourne, all the more because his conscience was not quite at ease, did not at all relish this plain speaking from a candidate for national bounty. "Without doubt," Cary's son admits, "the publication of a sonnet in honour of a fallen minister was impolitic." His conduct was pronounced disrespectful to the Government, and Lord Holland, to whom Rogers had again urged Cary's claims, seems to have expressed this view pretty strongly. Rogers's reply (December 25, 1838), part of which may be quoted, says all that is necessary on such a policy :

> The more I reflect upon it the more I am convinced it could not be : for a gentler, meeker spirit does not exist than Cary's. He may write with warmth under a wrong impression—he may turn when he thinks himself trodden upon—but if ever I knew a man, and I have known Cary in all weathers, he cannot be what you say he was thought to be. . . . Was the pension-list committee averse to such pensions ? Quite otherwise, as I am assured by Lord John Russell.
>
> But he has written a sonnet. What had not Montgomery done, when Sir Robert Peel gave him what he did ? [1] If Dryden and Johnson were now alive and pouring forth toryism or bigotry, would not I serve them if I could ? Cary has now withdrawn his friendship from me. He thinks

[1] James Montgomery, the poet, had been imprisoned for political offences in 1795-6. Peel gave him a pension of £150 per annum in 1835.

I was his enemy in this matter, but that shall not make me less anxious to render him any service in my power, but power I have none.

We hear nothing more for over two years, though Rogers must have continued his importunities personally or by letter. At last, shortly before the General Election of 1841 which was to bring Peel and the Tories into power, Melbourne grudgingly consented to reconsider the matter, and finally sent Rogers a message that "there was very little money to dispose of, but Cary should have £100 per annum." This did not satisfy the shrewd banker-poet :

I replied [he tells us] that "it was so small a sum, that I did not choose to mention the offer to Cary ; and that, as soon as Sir Robert Peel came into office, I should apply to him for a larger sum, with confident hopes of better success." Lord Melbourne then let me know that Cary should have £200 a year ; which I accepted for him.

On August 23, 1841, Cary received the grant of his pension ; it was almost the last official act of Lord Melbourne's Ministry. Cary, as a sound Whig, was well content (in accordance with the feeling of the age) to accept assistance from the ministers whose policy, in spite of the Durham affair, he approved on the whole. Rogers met him one day in Hyde Park, when he remarked that "he was better pleased to receive £200 a year from Lord Melbourne than double the sum from Sir Robert Peel." After all he did not prove very expensive to the Government, for he received his pension for just three years. It was much, however, that this short period could be spent in complete comfort, even in comparative affluence ; and for this due credit must be given—to Rogers.

The evening of life passed for Cary placidly and not without enjoyments ; but there was much to waken frequent

melancholy thoughts. Old friends were fast dropping away "into the clammy and numbing night-fog." Coleridge and Lamb were now only memories, though cherished ones; and there were many gaps among his numerous relatives and old Oxford associates. His father, his wife, and his brother-in-law Price had died within a few years of each other. Walter Birch, the most intimate of his school and college friends, followed them about 1840; and during his last few years most of Cary's surviving letters are addressed to William Digby or to Edward Bullock. With these two he had corresponded more or less regularly ever since the Oxford days of half a century before, but most of the letters written before 1838 have been lost. Cary introduces these two friends in some sober verses written at Iffley in August, 1841:

> Where are they, the faithful crew,
> That wont with converse gay,
> Or graver mood, as best they knew,
> To smooth the rugged way?
> The most to other climes removed,
> Remembered still, and still beloved,
> Beyond the reach of fortune blest;
> Two only left, alas! to cheer
> The few short hours that linger here
> Till we, like them, shall rest.

Another link with the past was broken by the death, in the spring of this year, of George Dyer, Lamb's lovable and absent-minded G. D. Cary, who had known him well through Lamb, wrote at his widow's request an epitaph, admirably appropriate and indeed almost as well suited to the writer himself. Dyer was buried in Kensal Green Cemetery, then "the most beautiful of churchyards," according to Crabb Robinson; but it is not a very peaceful

resting-place now, and the bad air has made Cary's epitaph almost illegible. We may therefore give it here :

> Above the scholar's fame, the poet's bays,
> Thus, Dyer, on the tomb we write thy praise ;
> A life of truth, a heart from guile as free
> In manhood and in age as infancy ;
> And brotherly affection, unconfined
> By partial creeds, and open to mankind.
> E'en here did Heaven to recompense thee send
> Long life uncensured and a tranquil end.

During the last of his summer visits to his son's cottage at Iffley, in 1841 and 1842, Cary's bodily strength began to show signs of failing. He was unable to walk very far, and had even to drive into Oxford ; his favourite exercise was now in part replaced by games of quoits and bowls with his sons and grandsons. Nevertheless his mental vigour was unimpaired, and besides his labours in revising the Dante, he continued almost as omnivorous a reader as ever. Henry Cary says that at this period he went through the whole of Lucian and Rabelais. His own letters tell much the same story : " I read Plato through last year," he writes casually to Digby in 1842 ; and his enthusiasm for the Neo-Platonist, Henry More, was as keen as ever. In another letter to Digby, after quoting More's definition of " Form " (in the Platonic sense), he adds : " O thou, falsely termed a Latitudinarian by those who know thee not, better mightst thou be named Profunditarian ! "

In the autumn of 1842 Cary changed his headquarters in London for the last time. He writes to Digby (November 25) from 6, Charlotte Street, Bloomsbury : " I am now a lodger in a house taken by Francis, for the purpose of carrying on a School of Art, that has been long established in it.

Nothing could suit me better in the way of apartments, and I am perfectly satisfied with my landlord and landlady." Francis had married the year before, and now took over the directorship of "Sass's Art School," as it was still often called from the founder, under whom Francis himself had commenced his art studies. There is a pleasant picture of Cary among his son's pupils in the reminiscences of C. W. Cope, the historical painter, who had been a fellow-student of Francis at Sass's, and remained his intimate friend :

Francis filled the duties of son and housekeeper in an exemplary manner. Devoted as he was to his art, nothing was allowed to prevent him from driving out with his father daily, during the finest parts of the day. His devotion to him was most touching. At the occasional meetings of young friends in the evenings Mr. Cary would always be present, quietly enjoying their talk and fun, sitting with a long clay pipe in his lips. His amiable gentle nature spread a calm through the room and seemed to sanctify it. After Francis's marriage Mrs. Cary was as a daughter to him.[1]

We cannot be quite sure about the pipe (this is the only evidence that Cary was a smoker), but we will hope it is true. All friends of Charles Lamb *ought* to have smoked !

Francis, who kept the Charlotte Street academy for over thirty years, was a very successful teacher, and several of his students afterwards became eminent ; Millais, Rossetti, and the sculptor Armstead are the most famous, but a later pupil, Samuel Butler, the author of *Erewhon*, is worthy of mention though his art studies were not a great success. D. G. Rossetti's attendance, which began in 1842 or 1843 while he was still a mere youth, was no doubt due to his father's old acquaintance with the Cary family. Gabriele Rossetti had resumed his Dante studies in 1832 with an

[1] *Reminiscences of C. W. Cope, R.A.*, ed. C. H. Cope (1891), p. 28.

essay, *Sullo Spirito Antipapale che produsse la Riforma*, the English translation of which (1834) was dedicated to Cary. He was befriended by Charles Lyell, a Scotch botanist and student of Dante, and father of the well-known geologist, Sir Charles Lyell. From 1836 Cary also became friendly with the elder Lyell, and the two corresponded a good deal on the subject of Dante.[1]

The attendance of D. G. Rossetti at the academy in which Cary was living at the time connects the two translators in an interesting fashion. There can be no doubt that Cary took some notice of the brilliant young art student who was later to do so much to foster the love of Italian art, and above all of Dante's poetry, in England. Little is known of these earliest years in the career of the painter-poet; but his brother and biographer, W. M. Rossetti, speaks of his showing some of his earliest sonnets to his fellow-students at Sass's, and thinks they may have been translations from Dante and other Italian poets. It seems, at any rate, to have been just at the close of Cary's life that the young poet first became deeply interested in Dante. His father's somewhat crabbed studies had done little to arouse his curiosity concerning the *Divina Commedia*; and we cannot be far wrong in attributing to his conversations with Cary the birth if not the growth of Rossetti's love of Dante.

This is all the more probable when we recollect that it was just at this time that Cary was busied in rounding off

[1] Lyell, who published the first complete English version of the Canzoniere of Dante in 1835, wrote to Cary in March, 1836, asking for his advice in revising the work. In consequence the second edition (1842) was dedicated "with respect and esteem" to Cary, and his "valuable strictures" were acknowledged in the preface. Some of the later letters from Cary to Lyell are printed in the *Memoir*. In one dated May 1, 1844, Cary anticipates curiously the plan of D. G. Rossetti's version of the *Vita Nuova* by advising Lyell to translate that work in a style "formed as nearly as possible on the best prose writers of the Elizabethan age."

the revision of his translation. A good deal had been done before 1842, as we have seen, but it was in this year that definite arrangements were made with a publisher and the printing actually begun. A letter to Digby (February 11, 1842) tells us that the edition of 1831 was exhausted, and that negotiations (apparently with Taylor) for reissuing the work either with the Italian text or with the well-known illustrations by Flaxman had fallen through.[1] Cary therefore made an arrangement with William Smith, the publisher of his editions of English poets, to print the revised work from stereotype plates, so as to secure the copyright for his sons. Two octavo editions, both in a single volume, were issued at the same time; one (at 10s. 6d.) in single columns, and a cheaper form (at 6s.) in double columns, with a larger page. The second was designed to prevent American piratical publishers from underselling the English edition. They had done so previously as early as 1822, when the English edition of 1819 was reprinted at Philadelphia.[2]

[1] Cary's Dante was not issued with illustrations during his lifetime, though in 1827 seven of William Blake's designs, engraved by the artist, were issued with quotations from Cary's text. The first illustrated edition seems to have been the American one of 1845 (see next note), with some of the Flaxman designs. In 1866 Cary's Dante was printed (in folio, two parts) for the first time with the illustrations by Gustave Doré (London: Cassell, Petter & Galpin; New York: P. F. Collier). This has often been reissued, both in England and in America, in various sizes.

[2] This appeared as two volumes in a series: "The Works of the British Poets. . . . Edited by Robert Walsh, Jr., vol. xlv [xlvi]: Cary: Philadelphia: published by Samuel F. Bradford, for John Laval: 1822" (12mo). Dante's name does not appear until the half-title. Cary's cheap edition in 1844 did not prevent a second American piracy; in 1845 his revised edition was reprinted with twelve of the Flaxman designs (New York: D. Appleton & Co.; Philadelphia: Geo. S. Appleton). In spite of the rivalry of Longfellow's translation, Cary's has been almost as popular in the U.S.A. as in England. The Appleton edition of 1845 was reprinted four times up to 1890, and there are at least a dozen other independent issues, including one of the *Inferno* in Cary's version, "condensed for busy people" (Buffalo, N.Y., 1895). In addition, of course,

In a letter to Digby of July 22, 1842, Cary writes of this matter with characteristic good-nature ; to issue as cheap an edition as possible is, he thinks, "the best means of preventing what is commonly called piracy, but, as matters stand, is surely no more than a fair competition between the two countries." This is rather an odd view seeing that Cary had of course received nothing from the American publisher. He adds a better argument for the cheap edition : "I have too a fellow-feeling with those among my own countrymen who cannot allow themselves dear books."

Progress with the Dante, on account of delays in the printing, was very slow, and Cary began to doubt whether he would "live to see the end on't" ; but at last, on February 7, 1844, he was able to write to Digby : "I am much as usual, or rather better to-day, from being just about to go to my printer with the last sheet of Dante corrected." A month later the new edition was actually on sale, and Cary's life-work, so far as Dante is concerned, was finished. In the brief new preface Cary acknowledges help received from "Mr. Carlyle, one of the most original thinkers of our time ; my long-experienced friend, Mr. Darley, one of our most genuine poets ; and Mr. Lyell, my respected fellow-labourer in the mine of Dante." Finally he bids farewell to his Dante studies in a sentence of singular modesty : "At an advanced age, I do not imagine myself capable of otherwise improving an attempt which, however defective, has at least the advantage of having had my earlier days bestowed on it."

In fact, despite the unfortunate distraction of Cary's Museum duties, which had delayed the revision so long, the

many editions have been issued simultaneously in England and America. In England there have been about twenty new editions since Cary's death. No other translation (except I. C. Wright's and Longfellow's) has exceeded two editions.

final edition of Cary's Dante, both in text and notes, is a remarkably sound and solid piece of work. Not to speak here of the translation itself, Cary's notes, which had now grown to a considerable bulk, have been the starting-point for all later English commentaries. English editors owe a great deal to Cary's scholarship and judgment, though not all have been as just and as generous in acknowledging the debt as the late A. J. Butler, himself not the least eminent among Dante scholars of recent years :

Cary's translation [says Butler in the preface to his prose version of the *Inferno*] remains, in text and commentary, unquestionably the best book to which the study of Dante in England has ever given birth. It is astonishing how constantly it occurs that when one has hunted up, or fortuitously come across, some passage to illustrate Dante rather out of the ordinary run of literature, one finds that Cary has got it already.

The rest is but the story of Cary's peaceful and almost painless sinking towards the end. In the summer of 1843 there appeared symptoms indicating an impending break-up of the constitution. Much relief was obtained by a stay at Sandgate, where his youngest son, Richard, Francis, or the latter's wife, remained with Cary until late in the autumn. Cary was delighted with Sandgate, "one of the pleasantest places I have been at," he tells Bullock, continuing :

The sea is almost always up nearly to our chamber windows. A high green bank, partly clothed with trees, protects us in front from the north, and a hill, between this and Folkestone, from the east. Add to this that the drives along the shore and up among the hills are delightful. All that is wanting is a little sand to expatiate on. The communication with London is made expeditious by the railroad lately opened

to Folkestone, so that Francis is enabled to visit us weekly without inconvenience.

Cary contrived to expatiate a little without the assistance of sand. The fruits of his meditations at Sandgate were two pleasant little poems, written in October in his seventy-first year, and not without interest as his last original work. Though Byronism had come and was already going, and Tennyson and Browning were now in full career, Cary remained faithful to the school of Gray, the hero of his youthful days. In the stanzas *On a View of Folkestone Cliffs*, the unimpaired liveliness of Cary's curiosity is shown in a strikingly exact forecast of the modern aeroplane. The steamship and the railway train, whose birth he had witnessed, suggest quite naturally their counterpart in the third element :

> To earth or sea confined no more,
> Perhaps some destined day
> May mark the bold adventurer soar,
> Nor lose his purposed way :
> And what for fiction quaint we hold,
> Revealed in tale of poets old,
> Shall be, when hourly seen, believed,
> And fable be for prophecy received.
>
> O nobler empire yet than these !
> Ah, when shall man assert,—
> And learn, not less than land and seas,
> To rule his subject heart ?
> Then nearest to the heaven indeed
> May he with fearless course proceed,
> Tracing, in meek submissive love,
> The pathway marked by Wisdom from above.

The sentiment in the last stanza is in a mode now a little

out of fashion ; but perhaps it is not entirely irrelevant to an age which has discovered that machinery is a mixed blessing.

The other poem, which is briefer, may be given complete ; it gives a better idea of Cary in his last phase, and a better picture of his surroundings at Sandgate, than pages of biographer's prose could do :

SANDGATE.

October 11, 1843.

'Tis sweet, upon this couch reclined,
To hear the bellowing sea and wind,
And see the waves their foamy snow
Above the garden paling throw ;
Howe'er they roar, howe'er they foam,
They cannot harm this peaceful home :
The little flowers securely smile,
And blend their 'customed scents the while ;
Carnation pied and periwinkle,
With many buds of golden twinkle,
Geranium, " pansy freak'd with jet,"
And the bee-haunted mignonette.

But chief of all this shore the boast,
Like myrtles on Italian coast,
The bushy tamarisk is seen
With blossoms pink and tresses green,
Shadowing each rock or grassy ledge
That skirts the water's murmuring edge.

Here could I wish, so fate allow'd,
No longer toiling through the crowd,
Mine age in calm content to waste,
And mix with ocean's breath my last.

Fortified by the sea air, Cary returned to London for

the winter strong enough to carry his work on Dante triumphantly to a close. In the following spring he even began a fresh task of some magnitude, the preparation of a commentary for his Pindar; but this, as we have already mentioned, was never finished. For slighter efforts he remained quite fit until the very end. Early in 1844, fifty-six years after his first boyish verses had appeared in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, Cary once more became for a brief while a contributor to a periodical publication. This interesting little incident reintroduces to us several old friends of earlier days—Thomas Hood and Mary Lamb in person, and Charles Lamb in memory.

Some time during the winter Cary had, after an interval of more than ten years, got into touch once more with the ex-sub-editor of the *London Magazine*. In recent years Hood had been abroad most of the time, and it was only in 1840 that he settled again in London. After editing the *New Monthly Magazine* for three years he began, in 1844, a venture of his own, *Hood's Magazine*. A few slight notes, exchanged with Cary after the latter was asked to contribute, give us a pleasant glimpse or two of their renewed acquaintance. The first preserved, from Cary, is dated February 7, 1844, from his son's academy in Bloomsbury. It was sent with his second contribution to the new monthly, *The Court of Love*, a free translation from a recent Italian poet (Gherardi de' Rossi), which appeared in the number for March, 1844. Cary complains, only half-seriously, of an error in his contribution to the February issue, which he had just received: "Your printer or someone has made more nonsense than I intended of 'A Word for Bores,' by putting Sisyphus for Tantalus. Sisyphus had no stone *hung over* his head. Tantalus had, if we may believe Pindar, who was as likely to know as anybody." To this prose essay

we shall return in a moment. Hood's reply (undated) is most cordial. He writes from Devonshire Lodge, New Finchley Road, St. John's Wood, gives particular directions for finding the house, and adds : " I shall always be most happy to see you." After thanking Cary for his contributions and apologising for the mistake in the last, he reiterates his invitation : " You will find it a very pleasant ride here when you take an airing, and you scarcely can fail to find me at home." The last words are pathetic when we remember that Hood, though much younger than Cary, was now in a sad state of health, and survived the older man by only a few months. Cary's next note (February 19) ends : " I shall perhaps call on you some morning when I take Miss Lamb out an airing. I am always at home and to be met with from dinner time, five, till bed time, ten, but I think you never dine out." It is quite likely that Cary, who could still get about perfectly well, went to one or two of the " little modest dinners " at which, Hood's son tells us, he used to entertain his intimate friends at this time. The host, making light of his ailments, would give full rein to his sense of fun, and often set everyone laughing by his apt misquotations of Latin.

The reference to Miss Lamb in Cary's last note to Hood summons up an attractive picture of the aged scholar offering a place in his carriage to the sister of his old friend. Mary Lamb, after six or seven lonely years at Edmonton, had at last been removed (in 1841) to a residence nearer her surviving London friends. Until her death in 1847 she lived at Alpha Road, St. John's Wood, in " a nice snug little place," as she describes it. She was within walking distance of several friends, including Hood ; and no doubt it was at Miss Lamb's that Cary and Hood first met after their long separation. In Bloomsbury Cary was within carriage

CARY IN LATER LIFE

From an engraving after a painting by F. S. Cary.

distance of Miss Lamb, and it was a simple matter for him to call for her on his morning drives into the suburbs.

The article "A Word for Bores" mentioned above gives us Cary's last memories of Charles Lamb, "the man," as Crabb Robinson wrote after Mary Lamb's death, "most intensely and universally to be loved." Cary's last prose writing was a tribute, both in plan and in substance, to his dead friend. It is a whimsical "Elianesque" essay in defence of bores, appropriately signed "Philoborus." Bores are praised as "eminently individual," having a true character of their own. The genuine bore, also, is essentially a good man, like Sir Charles Grandison, Squire Allworthy, or even Mr. Pickwick. Miss Bates in *Emma* is "a female bore to the life"; and almost all women, Cary adds quaintly, "are more or less bores, and that because they are better and wiser than men; and the more they excel in this particular, the more chance they have of attracting us to them." The ancients did not describe bores, he maintains in bringing his pleasant little paper to a close:

Nestor, I am aware, may be deduced as an instance to the contrary, but he was a wise old man, and all such fall inevitably into this class. It is a sort of prose-euthanasia, introductory to the last change. Woe to them if they do not submit to it quietly and decently. One of the wittiest yet best-natured men I ever had the happiness to know, had too great an apprehension of this. He selected, I think, many of us for his friends and companions, chiefly on account of some premature recommendation he saw in us of this kind. Yet hear his dread of coming into possession of the same claims on our good-will himself. "His jests," he complained, "were beginning to grow obsolete, and his stories to be found out. He felt the approaches of age; and while he pretended to cling to life, you saw how slender were the ties left to bind him."

This has a characteristic touch of reticence; only the initiated would recognise the quotation from the preface, "by a friend of the late Elia," to the *Last Essays* of 1833, which establishes the identity of the "best-natured" friend. Six months after writing these words Cary followed Charles Lamb "from sunshine to the sunless land."

Little more need be said. I quote a part of the account of Cary's last days by Francis, his constant companion:

In the month of June he took lodgings at West End, Hampstead, and afterwards at Willesden, from whence he drove into town every day, spending his mornings in London, and the evenings in the country; this appeared to agree well with him, and he very much enjoyed the walks about the fields and lanes till about a fortnight before his death. Towards the end of July many little things happened to make us uneasy about him. . . . Still, till the last few days he continued to drive to Willesden; he then yielded to my wish that he should have medical advice, and accordingly consulted Skey [a Willesden doctor], whose remedies relieved him for the time, and only the day before his death his general sprightliness and good humour returned.

Cary died on the morning of Wednesday, August 14, 1844, in the little village (as it was then) of Willesden.

Probably it was the Archbishop of Canterbury, Cary's old acquaintance Howley, who was instrumental in securing for his remains the honour of burial in the Poets' Corner in Westminster Abbey. On August 21 he was laid beside Doctor Johnson and Garrick, near the spot where the poet Campbell had been buried a few weeks before. Cary's grave remained unmarked until 1868, when the present inscription was added, probably by his sons.[1] This brief

[1] A few words may be added here on Cary's descendants. His property was left equally to his six sons. The youngest, Richard,

and bald epitaph says a good deal to the meditative wanderer in the Abbey :

UNDERNEATH
LIE THE REMAINS OF
HENRY FRANCIS CARY M A
VICAR OF ABBOTS BROMLEY
FORMERLY VICAR OF KINGSBURY
WARWICKS
TRANSLATOR OF DANTE
BORN DEC 6 1772
DIED AUG 14 1844

At his death the Translator of Dante was still vicar of Abbots Bromley, the hundred-pound living he had received in 1796. Perhaps Cary was not exactly what has been called an "episcopable" man ; but he deserved better of his country than he received.

Public opinion at the time certainly endorsed the action of the authorities in giving Cary a place among the immortals ; but very few perceived the true significance of the honour paid to this obscure clergyman by the almost fortuitous benevolence of an Archbishop who had always been glad to do anything in reason for a friend. But I think Cary, had he known, would have understood ; and he would have been well pleased. For in the casual way in which

died in 1845, but the rest all lived to a good age, and of several there are many living descendants. The Rev. Offley Henry Cary, son of William Lucius, was for many years headmaster of Warrington Grammar School, and died as recently as 1919. Cary's second son, James Walter, became headmaster of Lewes Grammar School ; Charles Thomas, the fourth son, was vicar of Kingsbury after his father (1832-75). Of Francis and Henry we have heard ; the latter, after writing the *Memoir* of his father and editing some of his works, continued active as a translator for Messrs. Bohn until about 1870.

the national spirit so often goes to work, England, almost unconsciously, was doing honour to Dante in burying among her own great poets the man whom one of them had called "Dante's English Reincarnation." To be remembered as the interpreter to Englishmen of Dante and his Italy, this was all the honour Cary wished for. This he has obtained: "It is an ample fame."

CHAPTER 9. THE TRANSLATOR OF DANTE

CARY's life-work, as I have tried to show in the earlier chapters of this study, did not by any means begin and end with his translation of Dante. He was as widely read and as deeply interested in his native literature as in that of Italy ; his translations from Greek and from French are of considerable value ; and he did much in many ways to help on the movement in this country towards the closer study of Italian literature which had such striking results in the work of the younger Romantics, and later on in the literature of the Victorian age. Nevertheless it remains true that his version of the *Divina Commedia* is the outstanding achievement of his career both as scholar and as translator, and it is upon our estimate of its absolute value that his reputation must chiefly depend.

The historical interest and importance of Cary's Dante have, it is hoped, become sufficiently clear in the story of his life. Its effect both upon individual men of letters and in laying the foundations of Dante studies in England scarcely needs further emphasis. The purpose of this chapter, therefore, is to examine Cary's aims and achievement as a translator, and to compare them briefly with those of some of the many rival translators who have taken the field since his day.

It is curious that, in spite of the mass of excellent verse translations which exist in English, no attempt has yet been made, so far as I know, to write a comprehensive critical

survey of this department of literature. Most translators —and Cary himself is no exception—have been content to deal practically with the problems of their specific task, without attempting to generalise. Nearly all essays on the subject take the form either of prefatory remarks to a particular translation or of criticism of two or three rival versions of a particular poem. General principles are thus apt to be neglected, and a translator's preface too often consists merely of an attempt to justify a new rendering by picking holes in the old ones. Even that acute and disinterested critic Matthew Arnold, in his well-known lectures *On Translating Homer*, displays (for example) a curious short-sightedness in making the only test of a good translation the characteristic of "affecting powerfully" a scholar well acquainted with the original—ignoring entirely the opinion of the very person for whom a verse translation, at least, is presumably made, the intelligent reader unlearned in the language of the original. After this we are scarcely surprised to find, later on, arguments almost palpably absurd in support of the accentual hexameter in English, as a metrical form adequate to the Homeric measure.

It will be well, therefore, to disburden ourselves at starting of the frequently one-sided and misleading praise or censure of Cary's translation to be met with in many writings on this subject even in recent years, and remind ourselves of Cary's point of view. Having gained an idea of the principles which informed his method of attacking the problem of rendering the *Divina Commedia*, we may proceed with more confidence to the difficult business of comparison with other versions. What *sort* of translation did Cary set out to make, and how did he go about it? These are the questions we must try to answer first.

The prime difference between Cary and the typical

translator in the eighteenth century—men like Huggins, or Hoole, or Boyd—is to be seen not merely in Cary's truer appreciation of his author, but also in his way of approach to the actual process of translation. It was the practice rather than the theory of the eighteenth century which was wrong. A. F. Tytler, the author of an interesting little work *On the Principles of Translation* (1791), was not noticeably in advance of his age in matters of taste; yet his summary of the qualities which a good translation should possess commanded the full assent of Cary, and remains indeed unassailable to-day. A translation, says Tytler, should give "a complete transcript of the ideas of the original work"; its style and manner should be "of the same character with that of the original"; and lastly it should have "all the ease of original composition." This is excellent; but the application to specific works produces some curious results. For Tytler, Murphy's Tacitus and Melmoth's Cicero (both mere paraphrases) are the summit of art in prose translation; and Pope's Homer "improves the original." Cary took the rules more seriously, and he was helped in doing so by the dual aim which he placed before himself in 1797 when he began to translate the *Purgatorio*. This was, as we have seen from the prefaces to his editions of 1805 and 1814, to supply an actual aid to the understanding of the original, for those who knew a little Italian; and at the same time to produce, for the unlearned reader, a translation which should give as faithful an idea as possible of the *Commedia*, and should also be readable on its own merits as an English poem. The first intention would no doubt have been as well carried out by executing a prose translation; but its usefulness in helping Cary to keep as close as possible to the original can scarcely be overestimated, and largely accounts for his freedom

from the vices of other translators who gave no more than lip-service to the principles formulated by Tytler. As close a "transcript of the ideas of the original," that is, as much verbal fidelity, as could be reconciled with an attempt to echo the style and manner of the original and with the "ease of original composition"; there could be no better summary of Cary's aims as a translator—and, upon the whole, of his achievement.

It was perhaps natural that, to an age accustomed to regard a translation and a paraphrase as almost synonymous terms, Cary's standard of verbal fidelity should seem one of "rigid exactness," while later critics have much oftener censured him for paraphrasing too freely. In this matter, and again in the question of metrical form, Cary took his stand upon the absolute necessity for compromise in making a translation, if the result is not to be on the one hand a misleading paraphrase or on the other a mere "crib" or a monstrous hybrid. The demands of fidelity must, at whatever sacrifice, be reconciled with the necessity of considering the capabilities of the English language and of conforming to English literary traditions. Cary's rejection of the heroic couplet, into which the eighteenth century had impartially forced the hexameters of Homer and Virgil and the *ottava rima* of Ariosto and Tasso, was mainly in the interests of fidelity; his choice of blank verse in preference to the *terza rima* of Dante was due partly to the same reason, but also to another which weighed quite as heavily.

Cary would pretty certainly have agreed that, where the metre of the original is one already familiar in English (the *ottava rima*, for instance), it should be preserved. But the metre of Dante is an exotic in English, and even in original poetry it has never been quite successfully employed for a poem of any length. Cary was well acquainted with the

history of *terza rima* in English. He knew that in the sixteenth century an attempt had been made to naturalise it by the same group of poets who had introduced blank verse and the sonnet, and that after nearly three centuries the *terza rima* was still an alien, while the other measures had become so familiar that their foreign origin was almost forgotten.[1] This was enough for him. He knew (and with the partiality of an old admirer, praised too highly) Hayley's version in *terza rima* of three cantos of the *Inferno ;* but he did not believe that the metre could be successfully employed for a complete translation, and he rejected it deliberately : "the terza rima," he wrote, "would often be found totally unmanageable."

The abandonment of Dante's curious and powerfully individual metrical form was, it must be granted, a heavy sacrifice. Anything like a close echo of his rhythms had to be given up at once ; no other metre can produce the even, regular, and at the same time continuous effect of the *terza rima* in the *Commedia.* The only alternative was to choose a native metre of such a type, and handle it in such a way, that something *analogous* to the effect of Dante's rhythms should be the result ; the melody had, as it were, to be broken up and recast in an entirely new mould. The adoption of blank verse in a more or less definitely Miltonic form, and of a poetic diction in the tradition of Milton, followed almost as a matter of course.

With all their differences, Dante has more in common with Milton, both in spirit and in technique, than with any other English poet. So powerful was the individuality of both poets, moreover, that down to the present day no one

[1] See his remarks on these metres in the *Early French Poets* (1846), pp. 43, 52. Actually Chaucer was the first to attempt *terza rima* in English ; but apparently he wrote only a few lines of it.

has been able to throw off their influence entirely in composing poems in their metres and on themes of a heroic nature. In non-dramatic English blank verse the influence of Milton is still merely a question of "more" or "less"; and it is doubtful whether a completely new pattern will ever be evolved. To Cary, at all events, Miltonic blank verse came consecrated to serious poetry of an ambitious order by a century of assiduous cultivation. The earlier "Miltonising" poets of the eighteenth century—Thomson, Young, Akenside and the rest—had imitated the master's faults more faithfully than his virtues. In their hands, despite occasional passages of higher merit, the dignity of Milton had become pomposity, and his sublimity bombast; the Latin element in diction and syntax was grossly overdone, and the rhythms were heavy without vigour, and slow without variety. Cowper's *Task* (1785) was really the first poem which showed that its author knew how to modify the Miltonic medium for a purpose of his own. It was from *The Task*, and from Cowper's later translation of Homer, that Cary learned most in adapting the blank verse measure to serve his own ends in translating the *Commedia*.

In its rhythms Cary's blank verse does not depart very far from the pattern of the line in Milton. The movement is steady and dignified, though (since the diction is simpler and less latinised than Milton's) not so slow as in *Paradise Lost*. Cary is very sparing of feminine endings, and though the lines overflow as a rule, there is a fair number of single and self-contained lines where, as in the famous "Per me si va nella città dolente" of *Inferno* iii, Dante's phrasing obviously requires it. Only very occasionally is the translation linear for long together, giving Dante's tercet in three blank verse lines exactly. The passage just mentioned is an example; but even here this arrangement is abandoned

after nine lines, and Cary's more usual practice is to avoid the monotony and jerkiness of a line-for-line version by making the tercet either just under or just over three lines in the English. An instance of this maybe given from the passage describing Dante's admission to Purgatory :

> Then of that hallowed gate he thrust the door,
> Exclaiming, " Enter, but this warning hear :
> He forth again departs who looks behind."
> As in the hinges of that sacred ward
> The swivels turned, sonorous metal strong,
> Harsh was the grating ; nor so surlily
> Roared the Tarpeian, when by force bereft
> Of good Metellus, thenceforth from his loss
> To leanness doomed. Attentively I turned,
> Listening the thunder that first issued forth ;
> And " We praise thee, O God," methought I heard,
> In accents blended with sweet melody.
> The strains came o'er mine ear, e'en as the sound
> Of choral voices, that in solemn chant
> With organ mingle, and now high and clear
> Come swelling, now float indistinct away.
>
> (*Purgatorio*, ix.)

Only the first three lines here correspond exactly to Dante's tercet ; afterwards the English runs more freely.

In the arrangement of stresses Cary's practice is restrained ; he does not attempt the bold variety of Milton (which indeed differs widely from the comparative regularity of Dante's rhythms), and relies principally on a free distribution of pauses and a frequent inversion of the first foot. The passage just quoted will also serve to illustrate this point.

It is in diction that Cary's modification of the Miltonic style is most striking and effective. Curiously enough, this point has been paid very little attention by the critics ; even

those who have not carelessly disposed of it by declaring Cary's style to be "merely Miltonic" have failed to note precisely wherein it differs from Milton's.[1] Now it is true that in some respects—particularly in syntactical constructions which are easily recognisable—Cary keeps close to the practice of Milton. There can be no mistaking the pedigree of such phrases as "He thus to me in few," "Without or praise or blame," "After solution of my doubt"; or of such a passage as this, which might almost come from *Paradise Lost* itself:

> From his bounds Heaven drove them forth,
> Not to impair his lustre; nor the depth
> Of Hell receives them, lest the accursèd tribe
> Should glory thence with exultation vain. (*Inferno*, iii.)

But it would be a mistake to suppose that such lines are in all respects typical of Cary's style; the resemblance here is indeed largely due to a chance similarity in the subject matter. In fact, throughout the body of the translation Cary's actual choice of words is determined, to a far larger extent than is often assumed, by the example of the English poets *before* Milton. It was by a strong infusion of vigorous native turns of expression, derived from poets of the Elizabethan age or of earlier periods, that Cary succeeded in simplifying the somewhat cumbrous Miltonic style, and so adapted it for reflecting the brevity and vivid directness of Dante's manner.

Let us begin with a fair average example, Cary's rendering of one of the ample Homeric similes, a fondness for which Dante shares with Milton:

[1] Thus the late Richard Garnett (*Dictionary of National Biography*, article H. F. Cary) praised Cary for "avoiding the almost inevitable imitation of the Miltonic style," without noticing the means by which he secured his freedom.

As when the north blows from his milder cheek
A blast that scours the sky, forthwith our air,
Cleared of the rack that hung on it before,
Glitters ; and, with his beauties all unveiled,
The firmament looks forth serene, and smiles :
Such was my cheer, when Beatricë drove
With clear reply the shadows back, and truth
Was manifested, as a star in heaven. (*Paradiso*, xxviii.)

If this is like Milton at all, it is only because Milton sometimes writes like an Elizabethan ; and in the ease and vigour of the rhythms, and the simplicity and vividness of the imagery, this passage (besides being very near to the literal sense of the original) has much in common with the golden age of English poetry.

In such lines, though the general impression is unmistakable, there is little which we can point out definitely as a borrowing or reminiscence. Elsewhere, however, Cary's diction can be traced to its source without difficulty. His adoption of a word or a phrase from Chaucer, Spenser, or Shakespeare to render some peculiarly vivid or unfamiliar image in Dante was often instinctive and unconscious, the free and natural action of a taste equally cultivated in English and Italian literature. He acknowledges the debt when it occurs to him, but there are dozens of unnoticed reminiscences equally self-evident. Shakespeare, as we might expect, is the poet most frequently echoed. Thus in the passage from the *Purgatorio*, canto ix, which has already been quoted, there is an apt reminiscence of Orsino's first speech in *Twelfth Night :*

That strain again ! it had a dying fall :
O ! it came o'er mine ear like the sweet sound
That breathes upon a bank of violets.

Skilful echoes of this kind are to be found in every canto of Cary's translation. It is unnecessary here to do more than notice a few of the most striking instances.[1] Perhaps the most interesting of all are three distinct passages in which Cary ingeniously adapts phrases from a famous speech in the *Midsummer Night's Dream* to render Dante's references to lightning-flashes. Here are Shakespeare's lines : love, says Lysander, is

> Brief as the lightning in the collied night
> That, in a spleen, unfolds both heaven and earth,
> And ere a man hath power to say " Behold ! "
> The jaws of darkness do devour it up.

At the very end of the *Paradiso*, Dante tells of the sudden revelation of the Beatific Vision :

> . . . non eran da ciò le proprie penne :
> Se non che la mia mente fu percossa
> Da un fulgore in che sua voglia venne

Cary renders this :

> . . . the flight was not for my wing ;
> Had not a flash darted athwart my mind,
> And in the spleen unfolded what it sought.

Again in the *Paradiso*, canto xxx, Cary has " the lightning, in a sudden spleen unfolded " for Dante's " subito lampo " ; and finally there is this remarkable passage in his rendering of the *Purgatorio*, canto xxix :

> And lo ! a sudden lustre ran across
> Through the great forest on all parts, so bright,
> I doubted whether lightning were abroad ;

[1] In an appendix will be found a rather more detailed list of words and phrases which I have traced to Shakespeare or other early poets.

> But that, expiring ever in the spleen
> That doth unfold it, and this during still,
> And waxing still in splendour, made me question
> What it might be.

Comparison with the Italian shows that this is surprisingly near the literal sense ; and the Shakespearean phrase admirably fits Dante's words : "il balenar, come vien, resta," literally : "lightning ceases even as it comes." We may notice here also the use of "during," "waxing," and "question," which are very much in the Elizabethan manner.

Adaptations of a similar kind elsewhere are : "at war 'twixt will and will not" (from *Measure for Measure*) to render "che'l sì e'l no nel capo mi tenzona" ; "a tetter bark'd them round" (from *Hamlet*) for "di schianze maculati" ; "palpable and gross," a phrase several times used by Shakespeare ; and many more.

A few examples of single words borrowed from Shakespeare or his contemporaries may be added. Such are *fardel*, *slivering*, *cozenage*, *ensky'd*, *Counties* (for *Counts*), *parle*, its *whereabout* (suo dove), *auger*, *twyfold*, to *truck* (to exchange) and *losel*. From Chaucer, probably, came *gleed*, *purfled*, *waymenting* (bewailing) and a few more. Finally there is a group of words common to Milton and the earlier writers, or used only by Milton, but really on precisely the same footing as those just given. Examples of this group are *cresset*, *griding* (coined by Lydgate from *gird*), to *bolt* (sift), *emmet*, *grunsel*, and *bickering* (in the sense of *sparkling*).

We need not labour this point any further. Enough has been said, it is hoped, to show that Cary's style is in no way adequately described by the unqualified term "Miltonic." The simpler and racier elements which he introduced from earlier English diction enabled him, as a rule, to come close

to the vividness and simplicity of Dante without unduly sacrificing the dignity and "high seriousness" which the Italian poet shares with Milton, and which could be reflected in English only by some modification of the Miltonic style. At the same time it is hardly to be expected that Cary's attempt to blend two styles should be uniformly successful. The "Miltonising" origin of his blank verse betrays itself in a slightly excessive residue of latinisms which are not justified by the original. We must, of course, distinguish here between gratuitous latinisms and the perfectly satisfactory rendering of learned and technical expressions. In many passages of abstract exposition "the thoughts and things to be expressed," as Coleridge remarked, "require learned words from a learned poet"; and there was sufficient authority for such words either in Milton himself or in the prose theologians of the seventeenth century, like Cary's favourite Henry More. Such are *parhelion*, *twy-fold*, *affiation*, *impregned*, *impassible*, *disparted*, *illapse*, and the technical senses of *substance*, *accident*, *virtue*, *complexion* and the like. But there is nothing in the original to warrant such renderings as "this they will effectuate" for "questo verrà fatto" (*Paradiso*, xvii, 50), "opacous membrane" for "pelle," the skin over a mole's eyes (*Purgatorio*, xvii, 3), or "retractile claws" for the "branche" of Geryon (*Inferno*, xvii, 105). These somewhat clumsy latinisms are not, indeed, very numerous, but we could wish that Cary had cleared away more of them in revising his translation. Curiously enough they are generally found in connection with another fault, though one which has at least some excuse. This is a tendency to make slight additions to the matter of the original, chiefly epithets which may be implied but are not expressed by Dante. Cary, of course, frequently rearranges the matter of a sentence; but he scarcely ever

omits or alters what he finds. He seems however to have held himself free to make occasional additions with the object of attaining greater clearness or dignity. Thus we find "the *light* autumnal leaves," "the date *more luscious* for my fig," and "the *verdant* rivage." These might perhaps pass; but where, as in the examples given above, the additions are ugly latinisms, they cannot be justified. Cary was probably afraid that in some passages a too literal rendering of Dante's stark simplicity of expression, divorced from the music of his "dolci rime," would be intolerably bald and awkward. The danger is real enough, as may be seen from some of the later line-for-line translations; but it must be admitted that Cary has not always avoided the opposite extreme of turgidity and "watering down."

But it is easy to exaggerate these superficial and occasional blemishes; and Cary's successors, very humanly anxious to show that their own versions have, in Matthew Arnold's phrase, "a proper reason for existing," have not been slow to do this. But in an enterprise of this magnitude it is the general effect which counts; and judged in this way, Cary's version satisfies the supreme requirement: *it has a style*. It would be extravagant to suggest that it is a style which fully reflects every facet of Dante's—his sublimity, his dignity, his tenderness, his astonishing simplicity. Yet at least Cary's has an all-round adaptability, a flexibility (decidedly non-Miltonic), which enables it to approach within measurable distance of its original in all these qualities, while retaining a continuity and evenness of texture which corresponds as closely, perhaps, as is possible in English to the marble clarity of Dante's form. We may sum up this matter by quoting from one of the earliest criticisms of Cary's work, perhaps the most penetrating which has ever appeared —that in the two letters from Coleridge to Cary, written in

1817, which have been noticed before in another correction. In the first he says :

In the severity and *learned simplicity* of the diction, and in the peculiar character of the blank verse, it has transcended what I should have thought possible without the Terza Rima. In itself, the metre is, compared with any English poem of one quarter the length, the most varied and harmonious to my ear of any since Milton, and yet the effect is so Dantesque that to those who should compare it only with other English poems, it would, I doubt not, have the same effect as the Terza Rima has compared with other Italian metres.

This is strikingly amplified in the second letter, written a week later :

I still affirm that, to my ear and to my judgement, both your metre and your rhythm have in a far greater degree than I know any instance of, the variety of Milton without any mere Miltonisms, that . . . the verse has this variety without any loss of *continuity*, and that this is the *excellence* of the work considered as a translation of Dante—that it gives the reader a similar feeling of wandering and wandering, onward and onward. Of the diction, I can only say that it is Dantesque even in that in which the Florentine must be preferred to our English giant—namely, that it is not only pure *language*, but pure *English*.

Despite the friendly enthusiasm with which Coleridge writes, close examination of Cary's verse bears out most of his praise.

It is an easy task to find examples of Cary's success in rendering the many episodes of description or narration in the *Commedia*, particularly in the *Inferno*. Such are the picture of the infernal ferryman, " Caron dimonio, con occhi di bragia " (*Inferno*, canto iii) ; the world-famous episodes of Francesca (canto v) and of Ugolino (canto xxxiii) ; the

"mournful wood" of the suicides changed into trees (canto xiii); the interview with Farinata and the father of Dante's friend, Guido Cavalcanti (canto x); and in the other *cantiche*, the episodes of Casella (*Purgatorio*, ii), of Buonconte da Montefeltro (canto v), of Cacciaguida, Dante's ancestor (*Paradiso*, xv-xvii), and many more. A single passage of this kind may be given, from the narrative of Ulysses (*Inferno*, xxvi), which Cary renders with close fidelity, yet in such natural and idiomatic English that it might be taken for an original composition. The Greek hero, condemned as an evil counsellor to the flames of the eighth chasm in the eighth circle of hell, describes his last voyage in the upper world; restored to Penelope after all the adventures which followed the fall of Troy, he could not subdue his eagerness to

> search the ways of life,
> Man's evil and his virtue.

Finally he sets out once more, on the voyage destined to end in sight of the Mount of Purgatory, which none living is permitted to approach:

> Forth I sailed
> Into the deep illimitable main,
> With but one bark, and the small faithful band
> That yet cleaved to me. As Iberia far,
> Far as Morocco, either shore I saw,
> And the Sardinian and each isle beside
> Which round that ocean bathes. Tardy with age
> Were I and my companions, when we came
> To the strait pass, where Hercules ordained
> The boundaries not to be o'erstepped by man,
> The walls of Seville to my right I left,
> On the other hand already Ceuta past.
> "O brothers!" I began, "who to the west
> Through perils without number now have reached;

To this the short remaining watch, that yet
Our senses have to wake, refuse not proof
Of the unpeopled world, following the track
Of Phœbus. Call to mind from whence ye sprang ;
Ye were not formed to live the life of brutes,
But virtue to pursue and knowledge high."
With these few words I sharpened for the voyage
The mind of my associates, that I then
Could scarcely have withheld them. To the dawn
Our poop we turned, and for the witless flight
Made our oars wings, still gaining on the left.
Each star of the other pole night now beheld,
And ours so low, that from the ocean floor
It rose not. Five times re-illumed, as oft
Vanished the light from underneath the moon,
Since the deep way we entered, when from far
Appeared a mountain dim, loftiest methought
Of all I e'er beheld. Joy seized us straight ;
But soon to mourning changed. From the new land
A whirlwind sprung, and at her foremost side
Did strike the vessel. Thrice it whirled her round
With all the waves ; the fourth time lifted up
The poop, and sank the prow ; so fate decreed :
And over us the booming billow closed.

But such "purple passages" are not, in one sense at least, the most difficult to translate. If it is impossible to capture all the perfection of the original, even a moderate rendering, aided by the intense human interest of the narrative, can scarcely fail altogether to impress an English reader. Hence it has always been in such passages that, for the last two hundred years, the translator of extracts has chosen to exercise his talents. But in a complete rendering, so far as we can judge at all by extracts, the test of success or failure will be found rather in the numerous passages of

abstract argument and exposition ; and it is just here that Cary's skill reaches perhaps its highest point. Something poetical survives even in a prose version of the story of Paolo and Francesca ; but to preserve the poetry in Dante's account (*Paradiso,* canto ii) of an experiment with three mirrors, to explain the dark patches on the moon's surface, is almost " to snatch a grace beyond the reach of art." In such passages, often highly abstruse and difficult to a modern reader, Cary's results are nearly always both more intelligible and more poetical than those of later translators who aim at line-for-line literality or attempt some form of rhymed verse. An example of this kind will serve to introduce some of the points of contrast between Cary and his later rivals. In the *Paradiso,* canto iii, Piccarda, one of those placed lowest in Heaven, explains to Dante, in a speech of some theological subtlety, yet of wonderful clarity and tenderness, the perfect contentment of souls in Heaven with their allotted station. Here is Cary's version :

> She with those other spirits gently smiled ;
> Then answered with such gladness, that she seemed
> With love's first flame to glow : " Brother ! our will
> Is in composure settled by the power
> Of charity, who makes us will alone
> What we possess, and nought beyond desire :
> If we should wish to be exalted more,
> Then must our wishes jar with the high will
> Of him who sets us here ; which in these orbs
> Thou wilt confess not possible, if here
> To be in charity must needs befall,
> And if her nature well thou contemplate.
> Rather it is inherent in this state
> Of blessedness, to keep ourselves within
> The divine will, by which our wills with his
> Are one. So that as we, from step to step,

Are placed throughout this kingdom, pleases all,
Even as our King, who in us plants his will ;
And in his will is our tranquillity :
It is the mighty ocean, whither tends
Whatever it creates and nature makes."
Then saw I clearly how each spot in heaven
Is Paradise, though with like gracious dew
The supreme virtue shower not over all.

This is not, of course, exactly literal ; but every phrase of the original has its adequate counterpart, and the whole is as clear, or very nearly as clear, as in the Italian itself. Let us put beside it part of the same passage in two of the best-known later renderings, that of Longfellow in blank verse, line for line, and that of Haselfoot in *terza rima*. In the former, Piccarda's speech begins thus :

Brother, our will is quieted by virtue
Of charity, that makes us wish alone
For what we have, nor gives us thirst for more.
If to be more exalted we aspired,
Discordant would our aspirations be
Unto the will of Him who here secludes us ;
Which thou shalt see finds no place in these circles,
If being in charity is needful here,
And if thou lookest well into its nature.

This is a literal enough rendering of the dictionary sense of the words ; but can it be called a translation ? " By virtue of charity " means in real English something quite different from what Dante's " virtù di carità " means in Italian ; " discordant unto " is neither Italian nor English ; and the line " If being in charity is needful here " would be utterly misleading to anyone who had not seen Dante's word " necesse," which shows that the English rendering must bear the quite un-English sense of " inevitable " or " of

absolute necessity." Let us now look at Haselfoot's version of these lines :

> Brother, our will by charity so keen
> Is calmed, as makes us that alone desire
> Which we possess, nor thirst for other scene.
> If we should feel a longing to be higher,
> Our wish would from His will discordant be,
> Who makes us to seclusion here retire :
> These orbits brook not that, as thou wilt see,
> If to be here in charity we need,
> And if its Nature is well conned by thee.

Haselfoot's attempt is a good deal more successful than Longfellow's ; it is at least English, and it is not unpoetical : but it is less exact than Cary's (the rendering of "necesse" again requires the Italian to explain it), and the straining after rhymes is evident in "keen," "scene," and "retire," and in the over-frequent inversion of the natural order of words.

This is not, I think, an unfair illustration of the relative merits of Cary's and the later versions in such passages ; if anything it favours Longfellow and Haselfoot, who are often much less intelligible.[1] But we must now consider more generally the relations between Cary and his successors, taking into account the vital questions of style and metrical form.

Though Cary's translation held the field without a serious rival until shortly before his death, the astonishing activity of scholars in translating the *Commedia* has more

[1] Longfellow here is no worse than Pollock or than most of the later blank verse translators ; and Haselfoot is decidedly better than Dean Plumptre, who has "unmixed with thirst's alloy" for "d'altro non ci asseta" ; or Wilberforce, who begins almost unintelligibly : "Brother, our will to quiet well is tried Virtue of charity." Dr. Shadwell is also weak in this passage.

than made up, during the last eighty years, for its neglect before the nineteenth century. According to Dr. Paget Toynbee, who has compiled laborious statistics, there were produced in English, between 1840 and 1920, twenty-three verse translations of the whole of the *Divina Commedia*, twenty-one of the *Inferno* alone, and seven and three, respectively, of the other *cantiche*.[1] It is manifestly impossible, within the limits of this chapter, to treat this terrifying mass of material in any detail ; the present writer, indeed, makes no claim to have examined more than a small proportion of the whole. But looking over Dr. Toynbee's list, it is not difficult to distinguish broad lines of division based mainly on the important question of verse form. By taking specimens from the better known in each group, and comparing them with Cary's version, we may hope to deal adequately with questions of principle and perhaps in some degree with those of practice.

There are three main groups of translators. The first and largest consists of those who attempt to reproduce in English the *terza rima* of the original. None of these has attained any great measure of popularity, but those of C. B. Cayley (1854), F. K. H. Haselfoot (1887), and Dean Plumptre (1887) are perhaps the best known. Secondly, there is a much smaller group (about a dozen) which abandons the *terza rima* but not the principle of rhyme. Heroic couplets, quatrains, Spenserian stanzas, and one or two other measures have been tried, but by far the most interesting of the group is the late Dr. C. L. Shadwell's version of the *Purgatorio* and the *Paradiso* in four-line "Marvellian" stanzas. The last group comprises blank verse renderings,

[1] "Chronological List of English Translations from Dante," in *Dante Studies* (Oxford, 1921), pp. 156-280. Dr. Toynbee gives also a list (of almost stupefying length) of translations of detached passages.

which are almost as numerous as those in *terza rima ;* the best known is that by Longfellow (1867).

This grouping, rough and ready though it is, usefully emphasises a fundamental diversity of principle on the problem of verse translation. We have seen that Cary's rejection of the *terza rima* was based chiefly on considerations of literary tradition. Was he judging too hastily ?—or, assuming that he was right so far, was he wrong in throwing rhyme overboard altogether ? It is on these questions that, since Cary's day, controversy has chiefly raged among the rival translators of Dante.

The numerous practitioners of *terza rima* have maintained that at all costs Dante's own metre must be preserved : "The form of the poem," Haselfoot remarks, "seems to me to be part of its very essence." Now in a sense this is a mere truism ; yet it has never been regarded as conclusive against making any attempt whatever to translate poems the metrical form of which cannot, in the nature of things, be preserved. In dealing with Greek or Latin, or again with Chinese (Mr. Arthur Waley's admirable translations will be remembered), the conclusion is self-evident ; some degree of success is certainly possible without imitating the original metres. But in the case of Dante the lesson has not been so easily learned. The affinities, linguistic and cultural, between Italian and English literature are close enough to make it seem an attractive enterprise, and to many even a practicable one, to reproduce Dante in English without any sacrifice, whether of form or of substance.

Let us look a little more closely, however, at the *terza rima* of the *Commedia.* Dante's metrical form has an infinitely subtle simplicity. It is unique in combining or rather achieving a compromise between the completely continuous form of blank verse and the discontinuous,

"eddying" form of all stanzaic measures. The basis is, of course, a formally continuous series of hendecasyllabic lines with interlinked rhymes running *ababcbcdc*. . . .

Caron dimonio, con occhi di bragia,
Loro accennando, tutte le raccoglie ;
Batte col remo qualunque s'adagia.
Come d'autunno si levan le foglie
L'una appresso dell' altra, infin che il ramo
Vede alla terra tutte le sue spoglie,
Similemente il mal seme d'Adamo :
Gittansi di quel lito ad una ad una,
Per cenni, come augel per suo richiamo.
Così sen vanno su per l'onda bruna,
Ed avanti che sian di là discese,
Anche di qua nuova schiera s'aduna.

(*Inferno*, canto iii.)

The interlinked rhymes, being emphatic and clearly heard in Italian, provide an element of continuity. But the scaffolding of the verse being the *terzine*, groups of three lines each, these tend to form semi-stanzaic units, *aba-bcb-cdc*. . . . This conflict of rhythmical movement Dante controls with a marvellous strength and delicacy of touch.

Now it is obvious that any poet who tries, even in original composition, to imitate the wonderfully delicate nuances of such a metrical form is setting himself a difficult task ; but the task of the English translator is doubly hard. Tied down to the subject-matter of his author, struggling at every line with the intractability of our English rhymes and the dispiriting effect of working in an alien, unfamiliar measure, he has little chance of success save perhaps in a few single passages. The test of a long translation, as I have said, is rather the average level of attainment than the success of one or two purple passages ; and tested in this way all the

terza rima versions which I have seen fail dismally. For the lines just quoted in the original, Haselfoot (by no means at his worst here) has :

> Charon the fiend, with eyes of live coal's glow,
> Strong beckoning collects them every one,
> Beats with his oar whoever lingers slow.
> As leaves detach themselves in Autumn dun,
> One close upon another, till the bough
> Yields to the earth what spoils soe'er it won,
> So does the evil seed of Adam now :
> They one by one from that shore cast them down
> At signs, as birds the lure's control allow.
> Thus they depart upon the waters brown,
> And ere they land upon the further side
> A new troop comes, the hither marge to crown.

No one could mistake this for anything but a " translation." In a dozen lines there are several instances of clumsy or un-English renderings for the sake of the metre or the rhyme, and the vice of " padding " to make up the line is very noticeable. It is hardly necessary to quote fully other versions of this passage in *terza rima ;* but we may give a few phrases. Cayley has in the second line the meaningless words " with beck instead of call," and in the third " at each who lags his oar is level " (presumably for " levelled "). " Tutte le sue spoglie," lower down, gives a good deal of trouble ; Cayley has " her weeds divested all," which though clumsy enough might pass ; Dean Plumptre has " its spoils funereal," a very vile phrase, and one of the most recent versions (E. Wilberforce, 1909) has this remarkable effort :

> . . . the spray
> Sees that earth's bosom all its spoils upheaves.

Taken all round, Haselfoot's version probably comes the

nearest in this group to a readable English poem, partly because, as he frankly confesses, he "preferred to sacrifice sense to rhyme rather than rhyme to sense." Dean Plumptre's practice is similar, but he paraphrases more freely, and his manner lacks dignity. Still, these two translators are at least correct in their rhyming; while others who mostly profess a greater literality, frequently permit themselves "rhymes" which would disgrace a schoolboy. Here are a few from various sources: *bend, expand; own, one; king, win; aspire, by her; first, thus; saith, great; Malebolge, told ye.* Even Haselfoot has many of the faults common to all this group. He is in general a good deal less exact than Cary, yet there are frequent instances of padding, as in: "So did I at the words he uttered do"; harsh inversions like: "This weight to bear which I in life lacked grace"; and flat or unmetrical lines like: "And soon as our way up to him we trace," or: "And I fell, like a man whom sleep doth strike." His version of the famous line, "E la sua volontate è nostra pace" (*Paradiso*, iii, 85) may serve as an example of all three faults at once: "Our peace in His will all its longings slakes."[1] We have already seen, in his version of Piccarda's address, the effect of these blemishes in passages of abstract exposition, which indeed all the rhyming translators contrive as a rule to enshroud in impenetrable obscurity.

[1] Dean Plumptre's attempt is worse: "And in His Will of our peace is the fount," the run of which is really anapæstic, like "My banks they are furnished with bees." Haselfoot's most serious fault is the deadness of his rhythms. He has an astonishing number of lines open to Pope's criticism: "Ten low words oft creep in one dull line"; and the rhythm has seldom the slightest relation to Dante's. One striking instance is in *Inferno*, vi, 14.

Dante: [Cerbero] Con tre gole caninamente latra.

Haselfoot: Barks out of his three throats in dog-like wise.

Cary: Through his wide three-fold throat, barks as a dog,

where Cary reflects the inverted stress of "gole," though later in the line.

In fact, I believe it is beginning to be realised that a *terza rima* version of Dante in English can never be more than a curiosity ; among the translations published during the last twenty or thirty years, the proportion of attempts in this measure is much smaller than among those which appeared in the Victorian age. Before leaving this part of the subject we may briefly suggest some reasons for the impracticability of the *terza rima* in English. Its failure to become naturalised for original composition is due less to the difficulty of finding the three rhymes (the Spenserian stanza is much more exacting in this respect) than to their peculiar arrangement. In English most rhymes are monosyllabic (masculine), while in Italian they are nearly all of more than one syllable (feminine). As the normal word-stress is about the same in both languages, this means that as a rule rhymes are more faintly heard in English than in Italian. Hence the curiously complicated interlinking of the rhymes in *terza rima* is " teasing " and difficult to follow in English. No one can fail to notice this who reads aloud a passage from Dante in the Italian, and then one from, say, Shelley's *Triumph of Life*, or Sir Thomas Wyatt's *Satires*. In translating, again, there is a further difficulty. If we reckon by *syllables* instead of words, English is a slightly more compressed language than Italian. In a literal rendering, the number of syllables in the English will often be no more than three-fourths of the number in the original Italian. In consequence, if the translator proposes to make a line-for-line version of Dante, or even to remain satisfied with a *terzina*-for-*terzina* equivalent, he will often find that he has too many syllables at his disposal, even after Dante's eleven-a-line have been reduced to ten by giving up the feminine rhyme. This is the cause of the padding which, in greater or less degree, disfigures all translations, whether

in *terza rima* or in blank verse, when an attempt is made to follow the original line by line.

Most of the second group of translations, those in a rhyming measure other than the *terza rima*, can be disposed of briefly. A good deal of what has already been said concerning the practical difficulties of rhyme will of course apply here. It is plain enough, too, that there is little to be said for such forms as the heroic couplet, the elegiac quatrain, or the Spenserian stanza, which have no structural element in common with Dante's measure.[1] To employ any of these is to lose on the swings as well as the roundabouts; the rendering cannot be very close, and the form cannot be anything like Dante's. Something must, however, be said of Dr. Shadwell's ingenious attempt to find an "equivalent," syllabic and formal, for Dante's measure in the four-line stanza of Marvell's well-known *Horatian Ode upon Cromwell's Return from Ireland*. This stanza consists of a couplet of octosyllabics followed by a couplet of six-syllable lines, and is made throughout to correspond to Dante's "unit" of three lines. In the preface to his first instalment (1892) Dr. Shadwell ably pleaded the advantages of his method. Dante's "stanza-arrangement" of *terzine*, he claims, is next in importance to the interlinking of rhymes, and though the Marvellian stanza ignores the latter it corresponds

[1] I. C. Wright's translation (1840), which was the first serious rival to Cary's, and was popular for a time, really belongs to this group. Its form is a six-line stanza rhyming *ababcc*; but by printing his version in continuous "*terzine*" Wright succeeded in persuading the *Edinburgh Review* that he had "very luckily solved the problem of the English *terza rima*." In fact, his verse has no more continuity than the couplet or the Spenserian; and the raising of the "unit" from three to six lines is quite unwarrantable. The *Quarterly* reviewer, in pointing this out and remarking also Wright's debt to Cary, summed up, perhaps rather severely: "The result, then, is not an English Inferno in the measure of Dante, . . . but only the sense of Cary twisted out of blank verse into a new and anomalous variety of English rhyme."

well to the former, being of approximately the same "capacity" (28 English syllables to 33 Italian). Some affinity also is claimed (though more cautiously) between the style of Marvell and that of Dante.

Now it is undeniable that the first impression made by Dr. Shadwell's version is very favourable. It appears to great advantage in brief quotations—the opening lines of many cantos, for example :

> O ye, that my discourse to mark,
> Have followed in your little bark,
> After my vessel strong,
> That singing goes along,
> Put back, and seek your shores again :
> Venture ye not upon the main,
> Lest of my lead bereft,
> Bewildered ye be left. (*Paradiso*, ii.)

The reader may like to have this translator's version of the lines in the *Purgatorio*, canto ix, to compare with Cary's rendering, which has already been quoted :

> The hallowed door he pushed ajar,
> And said "Go in, but be ye ware,
> "Whose gaze is backward given
> "Shall straightway be forthdriven."
> As on their hinges turned them slowly
> The spindles of that portal holy,
> With deep resounding clang
> The solid metal rang.
> Louder that sound, more harsh that roar,
> Than echoed from Tarpeia's door,
> When bare her hoard was left,
> From good Metellus reft.
> I turned away, my ears intent
> On the first tone from voices sent,

That with sweet music meeting
Te Deum seemed repeating.
I listened even as one attending,
When organ pipes with chant are blending,
And now the words are plain,
And now are lost again.[1]

Dr. Shadwell's rendering has many virtues ; it is scholarly, faithful enough though not literal, almost free from the cruder blemishes of other rhymed versions. It shows, moreover, a great advance upon all the *terza rima* versions in making a real attempt to reflect, in some degree at least, the style and *atmosphere* of Dante's poem. All the *terza rima* practitioners, despite their preliminary protestations, are much too preoccupied with torturing the English language to find their five stresses and rhyme, to be able to trouble about such abstractions as style and atmosphere. Dr. Shadwell does at least understand that these things are the most important of all. Having them, the translator will have all things else added unto him ; for they include and at the same time transcend all merely technical merits. As one of Dr. Shadwell's original sponsors, Walter Pater, expressed it, " the true test of a work of imagination, and therefore of any veritable presentment of it in the way of translation, is that it should enfold one, so to speak, in its own atmosphere, that one should feel able to breathe in it."

Yet when we apply this test of continuous reading, we have to revise our estimate a little. Flow and atmosphere,

[1] One of Dr. Shadwell's minor difficulties is that at the end of a canto his stanza does not fit Dante's final " clinching " line. Hence (as here) he has to put the last four lines (instead of the usual three) into a single Marvellian stanza, or (more frequently, cf. *Purgatorio*, ii, iv, v, vi, vii, etc.) to pad out the conclusion to fill an extra stanza. He applies both methods with considerable ingenuity, but there is some loss of effect in either case.

the ease of original verse, this translation certainly has; but is its manner near enough to that of Dante? It has perhaps a touch of his beautiful simplicity, and in this it sometimes goes beyond Cary's achievement; but it misses the dignity and stark sublimity of the original. It is open to the objection that the associations of the Marvellian stanza are not really appropriate to Dante; and curiously enough its style reminds us less often of the *Horatian Ode* than of the quainter and more "metaphysical" manner of *The Definition of Love* and similar poems. The measure is not well suited to a long poem (it fails particularly in narrative episodes), for like all short-line rhyming measures it is continually in danger of dropping into the jog-trot of a sing-song ballad metre. Nevertheless Dr. Shadwell's is by far the best of the versions in rhyme, and though he would probably have found the *Inferno* a very difficult proposition, it is to be regretted that he did not live to round off his work by rendering the first section in this medium.[1] His *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso* are not likely to become standard translations, but they will always have an individual interest of their own, and the attempt was well worth making.

We come now to the large group of translators who have followed Cary's example in using blank verse. It is at first sight surprising enough that there should be nearly a score of scholars who, agreeing with Cary on the principle of metre, nevertheless believed they could materially improve not only upon his version, but upon all others published before their own. But in fact, as the quotation from Longfellow will have indicated, the great majority of these translators differ widely from Cary on the question of the degree of verbal fidelity to be aimed at.

[1] He seems to have begun in 1882 with a passage from the *Inferno* (the Ulysses episode, canto xxvi), but the lines were not published until 1907, and no more has appeared.

We may, I think, dispose briefly of the few blank verse renderings which adopt Cary's principle of a qualified verbal fidelity—subordinating it, that is, to considerations of style and atmosphere. Most of them lean heavily on Cary himself; thus a recent translator, E. M. Shaw (1914), frankly pays tribute to Cary, "to whom," he remarks, "I am deeply indebted, and whom I have endeavoured to imitate in the honesty and faithfulness with which he renders his original." But there is no sign, either in this attempt or in any other which I have seen, of the evolution of a new blank verse style essentially different from Cary's and better fitted to represent in English the style of Dante's poem. The real question at issue, in considering the blank verse group as a whole, is that of verbal exactness.

One result of the movement, during the last century, towards scientific accuracy in scholarship (editing, biographical research, and the like) was a passion for a high degree of verbal exactness in translations. Upon prose renderings this had on the whole a beneficial influence; but with translations of great poetry the results were more doubtful. Browning, in the preface to his version of the *Agamemnon* of Æschylus (1877), proclaimed his intention of being "literal at every cost save that of absolute violence to our language"—and the result is an obscurity exceeding that of *Sordello*. Similarly translators like Sir F. Pollock (1854), W. M. Rossetti (1865), Longfellow, and more recently Sir S. W. Griffith (1912), Mr. Henry Johnson (1915), and Mr. Courtney Langdon (1918-20), all profess the aim which Rossetti expressed as "in one word—literality." None of them, so far as I can discover, thought of considering the question whether the word *literal* can be used of a translation of poetry in the same sense as when the original is in prose. Form and matter, style and substance, are in

some degree at least separable in prose works ; but how can a translation of the "substance" of Dante's poem which has no style at all, and is indeed scarcely English, be regarded as deserving of the name ? The heresy which vitiates all the work of this school had long since been several times exposed, most bluntly and effectively, perhaps, by Sir John Denham in the preface to his translation of the *Æneid*, Book II (1656) :

> I conceive it a vulgar error in translating poets, to affect being *fidus interpres*. Let that care be with them who deal in matters of fact or matters of faith ; but whosoever aims at it in poetry, as he attempts what is not required, so shall he never perform what he attempts ; for it is not his business alone to translate language into language, but poesie into poesie ; and poesie is of so subtle a spirit, that in pouring out of one language into another, it will all evaporate ; and if a new spirit is not added in the transfusion, there will remain nothing but a *caput mortuum*.

We may differ from Sir John in our interpretation of the ambiguous phrase "a new spirit," but on the principle of literality as an *ignis fatuus* his argument is conclusive.

Even as aids to the study of the original, the line-for-line blank verse renderings compare unfavourably, in the more difficult passages, with the prose translations of Carlyle, Butler, and others, who follow as a rule the commonsense method of rendering by tercets rather than single lines. To the reader who knows no Italian, Longfellow and his successors can offer nothing but the dry bones of Dante's narrative ; the rhythms, when the verse is not positively unmetrical, are dull, flat, and monotonous ; and the lines have often to be eked out by colourless padding just as with the line-for-line translations in *terza rima*.

It will not be necessary to quote many specimens from this group, the members of which show a strong family likeness.[1] From Longfellow, whose version is the only one of its kind which has circulated to any extent, a second extract may be given :

> I had already from those shades departed,
> And followed in the footsteps of my Guide,
> When from behind, pointing his finger at me,
> One shouted : " See, it seems as if shone not
> The sunshine on the left of him below,
> And like one living seems he to conduct him."
> Mine eyes I turned at utterance of these words,
> And saw them watching with astonishment
> But me, but me, and the light which was broken !
> (*Purgatorio*, v.)

This is merely bad prose cut up into worse blank verse ; short of sheer absurdity, the last line is as contemptible as any in Hoole or Boyd ; yet it is by no means exceptional. Here are a few more :

> So that, if I had seized not on a rock,
> Down had I fallen without being pushed.

The second line has exactly the rhythm of " Humpty Dumpty."

[1] Identical versions of single lines and phrases are not at all uncommon ; and the differences are often negligible : cf. Pollock and Longfellow in *Purgatorio*, v, 1-6 ; Longfellow and W. M. Rossetti in *Inferno*, ii, 52-66, xxvii, 64-72. Mr. Henry Johnson and Mr. Courtney Langdon often closely resemble Longfellow ; compare, for example, the three versions of *Inferno*, xiii, 1-15, *Purgatorio*, xvi, 85-96.

Sordello backward drew and said "Who are you?"

. . . . . .

The vigour of my legs was put in truce.

. . . . . .

And had it not been, that upon that precinct
Shorter was the ascent than on the other,
He I know not, but I had been dead beat.[1]

Longfellow's translation is read probably a good deal less than the number of reprints might suggest. It owes most of its vogue to the popularity of its author, with certain readers, as an original poet, and to the patriotic pride rather than the taste of his fellow-countrymen. "Pitt is quoted, and Dryden read," said Dr. Johnson of translations of Virgil in his day; and the same is true of Longfellow and Cary.

Most of the later members of this group have moderated a little the "almost painful accuracy" of Longfellow, as one of them describes it; but though their language is a trifle more like real English their verse is still flat enough. A couple of specimens may suffice. Here is Mr. Langdon's rendering of a passage in the address of Marco Lombardo on free-will and on spiritual and temporal power (*Purgatorio*, xvi):

[1] W. M. Rossetti has for this last quotation (*Inferno*, xxiv, 34-6):

And, if it were not that, on that precinct
More than the other one, the slope was short,
I know not he, but I'd been quelled for sure.

Both versions are remarkable instances of how the craze for literality can obscure all sense of the appropriate in diction; Dante's "io sarei ben vinto" is plain enough, but it has no associations with schoolboy slang. Rossetti, however, had a better ear for rhythm than Longfellow, and his verse, having fewer feminine endings, is less feeble and monotonous as a rule.

Forth from the hand of Him, who ere it lives
Delights in it, even like a little maid,
Who weeps and laughs, and wantons like a child,
Issues the simple soul, which knoweth naught,
Save that, proceeding from a Joyous Maker,
It gladly turns to that which pleases it.
At first it tastes things of little good ;
Deceived thereby, it runneth after them,
Unless a guide or check divert its love.
Hence, as a bit, a law must needs be set ;
A king must needs be had, who should at least
The tower of the truthful town discern.

It is only necessary to compare this with Cary's lines to form a sufficient idea of how much has been lost and how little gained by the insistence on a closer adherence to the mere *words* of the original :

Forth from his plastic hand, who charmed beholds
Her image ere she yet exist, the soul
Comes like a babe, that wantons sportively,
Weeping and laughing in its wayward moods ;
As artless, and as ignorant of aught,
Save that her Maker being one who dwells
With gladness ever, willingly she turns
To whate'er yields her joy. Of some slight good
The flavour soon she tastes ; and snared by that,
With fondness she pursues it ; if no guide
Recall, no rein direct her wandering course.
Hence it behoved, the law should be a curb ;
A sovereign hence behoved, whose piercing view
Might mark at least the fortress and main tower
Of the true city.

The perverse ingenuity and industry of the whole school of "literal" translators may be summed up in one brief specimen from the late Sir S. W. Griffith's translation in "hendecasyllabic blank verse." Here the extraordinary experiment is tried of closing every line with an unstressed syllable, by way of reproducing Dante's feminine endings :

As a geometer, who applies him wholly
To measuring the circle, nor discovers
By thought that which he needs for a beginning,
Even such was I before that wondrous vision.
I wished to see how to the circle fitted
The image, and how there it hath location.
But my own wings for that were not adapted ;
Only that suddenly my mind was smitten
By a lightning flash, wherein came that it wished for.
(*Paradiso*, xxxiii.)

But only by reading two or three cantos of this consecutively can one gain any conception of the remorseless monotony of such "rhythms" in a long poem. To imagine that the "trochaic cadence," without rhyme, reflects Dante's rhythm in any way whatever is about as sensible as to begin every line or every word with the same letter as in the Italian. No doubt someone will try this some day.

But we have perhaps given too much attention to the "literal blank verse" practitioners. Most of them, we may surmise, were better read in Italian poetry than in English. At least this would explain, though not excuse, their bland ignoring of all that three centuries of experience and tradition might have taught them concerning what can and what cannot be done with English blank verse.

What then is the conclusion of the matter? Simply this: that since none of the rhymed versions (with the possible exception of Dr. Shadwell's incomplete one) is more than an interesting curiosity, and since versions like Longfellow's have only a highly dubious "quotation" value, Cary's translation must still be regarded as alone fitted to form an introduction, for the unlearned reader, to the study of Dante.[1] Read and admired by Wordsworth and Keats, Lamb and Coleridge, Macaulay and Ruskin, it remains to-day, despite all defects of detail, solid in merit and not likely soon to be superseded.

The opinions of many of Cary's contemporaries concerning his life-work have been quoted in earlier chapters for their biographical as much as for their critical value. Those of more recent writers are perhaps of less moment, since in the long run it is the feeling of the general reader which counts; but I will give here the opinion of one later admirer of Cary's Dante:

It is generally better [wrote Ruskin in the second volume of *Modern Painters* (1853)] to read ten lines of any poet in the original language, however painfully, than ten cantos of a translation. But an exception may be made in favour of Cary's Dante. If no poet ever was liable to lose more in translation, none was ever so carefully translated; and I hardly know whether most to admire the rigid fidelity, or the sweet and solemn harmony, of Cary's verse. . . . It is true that the concise and rivulet-like melody of Dante must continually be lost; but if I could only read English, and

[1] In verse translation minute exactness in the text of the original used is not often of vital importance; but there are a few passages where Cary was misled by the imperfect state of the text in his day: some of these are corrected by the alteration of a word of two in Dr. Edmund Gardner's useful edition in *Everyman's Library* (1908). Dr. Paget Toynbee's edition (in the *Little Library*, 3 vols., 1900–3) also contains valuable introductory matter.

had to choose, for a library narrowed by poverty, between Cary's Dante and our own original Milton, I should choose Cary without an instant's pause.

The pleasant extravagance of this praise—so characteristic of its author—may help a little to excuse the "partiality of the biographer" with which the present study, like many of its kind, is doubtless tinged.

APPENDICES
AND
INDEX

I

LIST OF PRINCIPAL WORKS CONSULTED

I.—BIOGRAPHICAL

BLAKE, WILLIAM—Life, by A. Gilchrist, 1863, new edition 1880, 2 vols.

CARY, HENRY FRANCIS—Memoir, with his Literary Journal and Letters, by his son, the Rev. Henry Cary, 2 vols., 1847; The Devon Carys, by F. H. of Virginia, U.S.A., 2 vols., privately printed, 1920; The Family of Brocas of Beaurepaire and Roche Court, by Montague Burrows, 1886; Notes and Queries, IV Series, vol. vii, pp. 137, 234, 376, 465, X Series, vol. xi, p. 245.

CLARE, JOHN—Life, by F. Martin, 1865; Life and Remains, by J. L. Cherry, 1873.

COLERIDGE, SAMUEL TAYLOR—Life, by James Gillman, 1838; Narrative of the Events of his Life, by J. Dykes Campbell, 1894; Letters, edited by E. H. Coleridge, 2 vols., 1895; Literary Remains, edited by H. N. Coleridge, 4 vols., 1836–9.

DARLEY, GEORGE—Poetical Works, edited with an introduction by Ramsay Colles, n.d. (Muses' Library).

FRERE, JOHN HOOKHAM—J. H. Frere and his Friends, by G. Festing, 1899.

HAZLITT, WILLIAM—Life, by P. P. Howe, 1922.

HOOD, THOMAS—Memorials of T. Hood, edited by his daughter, with a preface and notes by his son, 2 vols., 1860; Hood's Own, or Laughter from Year to Year [First Series], 1839.

KOSCIUSZKO, THADDEUS—A Biography, by Monica M. Gardner, 1920.

LAMB, CHARLES—Life, by E. V. Lucas, 2 vols., 1905; Works of Charles and Mary Lamb, edited by E. V. Lucas, 7 vols., 1903–5; Works, edited by W. Macdonald, 12 vols., 1903; Letters, edited by A. Ainger, 2 vols., 1904.

LANDOR, WALTER SAVAGE—Life, by John Forster, 2 vols., 1869.

LISTER, THOMAS—Memoir in New Monthly Magazine, April, 1828; Dictionary of National Biography, article, "Thomas Henry Lister."

MITFORD, MARY RUSSELL—Life, in a selection of her letters to her friends, edited by A. G. L'Estrange [First Series], 3 vols., 1870; Letters, Second Series, edited by H. F. Chorley, 2 vols., 1872.

MOORE, THOMAS—Memoirs, Journal, and Correspondence, edited by Lord John Russell, 8 vols., 1853–6.

PANIZZI, SIR ANTHONY—Life, by L. A. Fagan, 2 vols., 1880.

PROCTER, BRYAN WALLER—B. W. Procter (Barry Cornwall), an autobiographical fragment, 1877; Charles Lamb, a memoir, by Barry Cornwall, 1866.

ROGERS, SAMUEL—Recollections of Table Talk, by A. Dyce, third edition, 1856; Rogers and his Contemporaries, by P. W. Clayden, 2 vols., 1889.

ROSSETTI, DANTE GABRIEL—Gabriele Rossetti, a versified autobiography, translated and supplemented by W. M. Rossetti, 1901; D. G. Rossetti: his Family Letters, with a memoir by W. M. Rossetti, 2 vols., 1895; D. G. Rossetti as designer and writer: notes by W. M. Rossetti, 1889.

SEWARD, ANNA—Poetical Works, edited by Sir Walter Scott, 3 vols., 1810; Letters, written between the years 1784 and 1807, 6 vols., 1811.

TALFOURD, THOMAS NOON—Final Memorials of Charles Lamb, 2 vols., 1848.

WAINEWRIGHT, THOMAS GRIFFITHS—Essays and Criticisms, edited by W. C. Hazlitt, 1880.

II.—GENERAL.

BRITISH MUSEUM—Report from the Select Committee on the condition, management and affairs of the British Museum, 2 vols., 1835–6; Report of the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the constitution and government of the British Museum, 2 vols., 1850; Lives of the Founders of the British Museum, by E. Edwards, 1870; Memories of the British Museum, by R. Cowtan, 1872.

DANTE—Dante in English Literature from Chaucer to Cary, by Paget Toynbee, 2 vols., 1909; Dante Studies, by Paget Toynbee, 1921.

OXFORD—Oxford in the Eighteenth Century, by A. D. Godley, 1908; "Modern History in Oxford, 1724–1841," article by C. H. Firth in English Historical Review, January, 1917; The Oxford Sausage, or Select Poetical Pieces written by the most celebrated wits of the University of Oxford, 1764, new editions, 1777, 1804, 1815, 1821.

III.—LIST OF TRANSLATIONS OF DANTE REFERRED TO IN CHAPTER IX

BUTLER—The Hell [Purgatory, Paradise] of Dante Alighieri, edited with [prose] translation and notes by A. J. Butler, 3 vols., 1892 [1880, 1885].

CARLYLE—Dante's Divina Commedia. The Inferno: a literal prose translation, with the text. . . . By J. A. Carlyle, 1849.

CAYLEY—Dante's Divine Comedy. . . . Translated in the original ternary rhyme by C. B. Cayley, 4 vols., 1851–5.

GRIFFITH—The Divina Commedia of Dante Alighieri. Literally translated into English [blank] verse in the hendecasyllabic measure of the original Italian by the Right Hon. Sir Samuel Walker Griffith, n.d. [1912].

HASELFOOT—The Divina Commedia of Dante Alighieri, translated line for line in the terza rima of the original by F. K H. Haselfoot, 1887. Second edition, 1889.

JOHNSON—The Divine Comedy. Translated by Henry Johnson, 1915 [blank verse].

LANGDON—The Divina Commedia of Dante Alighieri. The Italian text with a translation in English verse and a commentary by Courtney Langdon, 3 vols., 1918–21.

LONGFELLOW—The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri, translated by H. W. Longfellow, 3 vols., 1867 [blank verse].

PLUMPTRE—The Commedia and Canzoniere of Dante Alighieri. A new translation. . . . By E. H. Plumptre, Dean of Wells, 1886–7. Second edition, 5 vols., 1899 [terza rima].

POLLOCK—The Divine Comedy; or, the Inferno, Purgatory, and Paradise, of Dante Alighieri, rendered into English by F. Pollock, 1854 [blank verse].

ROSSETTI—The Comedy of Dante Alighieri. Part I. The Hell. Translated into blank verse by W. M. Rossetti, 1865.

SHADWELL—The Purgatory of Dante Alighieri (Purgatorio I–XXVII), an experiment in literal verse translation, by C. L. Shadwell, with an introduction by Walter Pater, 1892; Part II, The Earthly Paradise, with an introduction by John Earle, 1899; The Paradise . . . with an introduction by J. W. Mackail, 1915 [rhymed stanzas].

SHAW—The Divina Commedia of Dante Alighieri, translated by E. M. Shaw, 1914 [blank verse].

WILBERFORCE—Dante's Inferno [Purgatorio, Paradiso]. Translated by Edward Wilberforce, 3 vols., 1909 [terza rima].

WRIGHT—The Inferno [Purgatorio, Paradiso] of Dante, translated by Ichabod Charles Wright, 3 vols., 1833 [1836, 1840]. Second edition, 3 vols., 1845, third edition, 1854 [rhymed stanzas].

II

THE DICTION OF CARY'S DANTE

As evidence of Cary's views on the principles of English blank verse, the following brief extracts from the surviving portion of his correspondence with John Taylor during the preparation of the 1819 edition of the Dante are of some interest. Taylor was evidently a little anxious about the reception which the translation might receive from the reviewers, more especially on the question of metrical freedom. He writes (Dec. 30, 1818) quoting instances of lines such as: "Doth more and better execution" (*Paradiso* XVI, 71—the last word as five syllables, as often in Shakespeare), "which," he adds, "I do not think defective, but which the Quarterly Reviewer has no Feeling for . . . Precedents for all these are plentiful in Milton, but were he alive now, can you conceive anything more ridiculous than the rough handling he would get from Mr. *Gifford*, on account of his verse and his Politics?" Cary's draft reply deals with Taylor's queries in detail, and finally sums up in uncompromising terms: "I must risk the displeasure of the Quarterly Reviewer, rather than give up any one of the just rights and liberties of Blank Verse as we inherit it from Milton, Shakespeare, etc., which I should rather be inclined to extend where it can be done without danger of becoming lawless, than to recede from in any one point."

In the matter of diction Taylor shows more courage, fully approving Cary's use of archaic forms where supported by good authority. He even writes (June 1, 1819), proposing, in the line: "That mouldy mother is, where late were lees" (*Paradiso*, XII, 106), to "restore the word *Mother* [i.e. mould or fermenting scum] to its true spelling 'Mudder' or 'Modder,' from which it has been corrupted by Pronunciation, as ladder, bladder, and all such words still are in the North of England." Cary's response is significant: "If any authority can be brought for the use of the word *modder* or *mudder* instead of *mother* from the time of Spenser inclusive, I will thank you to insert it for me in the text; otherwise I should be unwilling to risk it." The less familiar form was not adopted, and the Oxford Dictionary supports Cary's scepticism: "there appears to be no evidence that the form *modder* was ever used for 'mother' or 'scum.'"

The following list of parallels and reminiscences amplifies that given briefly in Chapter IX. It is not exhaustive; and except in a few instances I have not thought it necessary to quote or consider

the original Italian. I have given the most striking of the words and phrases which Cary pretty certainly drew from authors before Milton—principally Chaucer, Spenser, and Shakespeare. Unless otherwise stated, these usages do not, so far as I know, occur in Milton; but I have included a certain number common to Milton and the earlier writers, because they are not "Miltonic" in the narrower sense. In compiling the list I have used, besides the Oxford *New English Dictionary*, the concordances to Shakespeare and Milton by Bartlett (1894) and Bradshaw (1894) respectively, and the Oxford editions of Shakespeare (the three-volume text), Spenser, etc. Cary's text is quoted from the Oxford reprint (substantially that of the 1844 edition); and for the Italian I have referred to the Oxford third edition of Dante's works (1904), which is still the most generally used.

INFERNO

Canto I, 22. "A man . . . *forespent* with toiling."

cf. 3 *Henry* VI, II, iii, 1: "Forspent with toil." Also elsewhere; but Shakespeare distinguishes the two words "forspent" and "forespent" (= "spent heretofore"). Cary's spelling (in all his editions) is inaccurate.

I, 58. "My *ken* discerned the form of one
Whose voice seemed faint."

"Ken" as noun and verb is common in Spenser, Shakespeare, and Milton; thereafter more or less an archaism—particularly the verb, which Cary has several times; cf. *Par.* VII, 58: "A mark . . . but little kenned," and VIII, 81: "Had but my brother's foresight kenned as much."

I, 126. "I to him *in few*" [*i.e. words*].

Frequently in Cary (*Inf.* III, 70, XXV, 129, etc.). Four or five times in Shakespeare (*Tempest*, I, ii, 144, etc.); curiously enough once only in Milton (*Par. Lost*, X, 157).

II, 92. "Sufferance of your misery
Touches me not."

cf. *Hamlet*, III, ii, 244: "We that have free souls, it touches us not." Milton has it once or twice in this sense, but Cary was pretty certainly thinking of the use in *Hamlet*.

III, 77. "An old man, hoary white with *eld*."

Common in Spenser (e.g. *F. Queene*, VII, vii, 31: "faint with cold, and weak with eld"), etc.; three times in Shakespeare, once in Milton.

III, 110. "Thus go they over through the *umbered* wave" [*i.e. dark, bruna*].

cf. *Henry V*, IV, Chorus, 9: "Each battle sees the other's umber'd face."

VII, 64. "The goods . . . for which the human race *keep such a coil*" [*i.e. make such an ado*].

Common Elizabethan; cf. *Much Ado*, V, ii., 93: "Yonder's old coil at home," and *All's Well*, II, i, 27, "I am . . . kept a coil." Cary read "sì rabbuffa" here in place of the now accepted reading "si."

VIII, 4. "We marked uphung
Two *cressets*."

Used by Shakespeare, 1 *Henry IV*, III, i, 15, and by Milton, *Par. Lost*, I, 728. In Cary again, Par. XVIII, 65.

VIII, 109. "Hesitating I remain,
At war 'twixt will and will not in my thoughts."

Cary notes: "The words I have adopted as a translation are Shakespeare's, *Measure for Measure*, II, ii, 33." Dante: "Che il sì e il no nel capo mi tenzona."

XVIII, 112. "*Draff* of the human body" [*excrement*].

Used by Chaucer, Shakespeare, and Milton; cf. 1 *Henry IV*, IV, ii., 35, and *Samson Agon.*, 574.

XX, 45. "Carrara's hind, who *wons* beneath" [*dwells*].

Very common in Chaucer, Spenser, etc. Not used by Shakespeare; once only by Milton.

XXII, 49. "A *losel* vile, a spendthrift."

Common in Spenser; once in Shakespeare (*Winter's Tale*, II, iii, 108); not used in Milton's poetry.

XXIV, 122. "Rainèd down from Tuscany
To this dire *gullet*" [*i.e. gulley, gola*].

This use of "gullet" is occasional Elizabethan; N. E. D. gives from Holland's Pliny (1601): "Neer unto the two-fold gullets or passages of the Alpes."

XXVII, 45. "The old mastiff of Verruchio and the young,
. . . still make . . . an *auger* of their fangs" [*gimlet*].

Poetic use twice in Shakespeare, *Coriolanus*, IV, vi, 88, and *Macbeth* II, iii, 123: "our fate, hid in an auger-hole."

XXVIII, 12. "The *griding* force of Guiscard's Norman steel" [*piercing*].

Not in Shakespeare; once in Milton (*Par. Lost*, VI, 329); but "to gride" is common in Spenser (*F. Queene*, III, i, 62, etc.), and occurs first in Lydgate.

XXVIII, 21. "A *runlet*, that hath lost
Its middle or side stave, gapes not so wide" [*cask, barrel*].

Cary spelt "rundlet" in all editions. The word is fairly common Elizabethan; N. E. D. gives "a rundlet of Renish wine" from Nashe, and others in Lyly, Middleton, etc.

XXVIII, 37–8. "A fiend . . . Hacks us thus cruelly, *slivering* again
Each of this *ream*."

Shakespeare has "to sliver" (to tear off a piece) and the noun "sliver" (a small branch) several times (*Lear*, IV, ii, 34, etc.); Milton has the noun once or twice in his prose only. The use here of "ream" (literally from Dante's "risma"), for "crowd" or "class," seems to be without close parallel in English.

XXIX, 73–4. "From head to foot,
A tetter barked them round" [*skin eruption*].

cf. *Hamlet* I, v, 71: "A most instant tetter bark'd about, . . . with vile and loathsome crust, all my smooth body."

XXX, 27. "Two pale and naked ghosts I saw,
That *gnarling* wildly scampered" [*snarling*].

cf. *Richard II*, I, iii, 292: "Gnarling sorrow hath less power to bite." In Cary again, *Inf.* XXI, 129.

XXXII, 7. "No *emprize* to jest with" [*enterprise, impresa*].

Not in Shakespeare; and Milton uses it rather for "prowess, courage." In Cary's use it is common in Chaucer and Spenser (*F. Queene*, II, iv, 12, "Sir Guyon left his first emprise"), etc. In Cary again, *Par.* XXII, 118.

PURGATORIO

CANTO IV, 7. "*Whenas* aught is heard" [= *when*].

Common Elizabethan and Shakespearean; very rare in Milton.

IX, 43. "[Be] assured we are *at happy point*."

cf. *Troilus and Cressida*, III, iii, 89: "at ample point" (and elsewhere in Shakespeare).

IX, 135. " The strains came o'er mine ear," etc.

cf. *Twelfth Night*, I, i, 4 sq., and *supra*, Chap. IX, p. 303.

X, 104. " So *courbed* to earth, beneath their heavy *terms*
Of torment stoop they."

cf. *Hamlet*, III, iv, 155 : " curb and woo for leave to do him good," the First Folio has " courb " (i.e. bend, bow), which modern editors misleadingly alter. cf. also *Measure for Measure*, II, iv, 101 :— " under the terms of death."

XI, 57. " The *fardel* that I bear " [*burden*].

Common in Shakespeare (*Hamlet* III, i, 76, etc.) and earlier. In Cary again, *Purg.* XIX, 104.

XIII, 65. " The taming of a *haggard* hawk " [*wild, untamed*].

Common Elizabethan ; cf. *Much Ado*, III, i, 36 : " haggerds of the rock," etc.

XIII, 114. " The *merlin* cheated by a gleam " [*falcon*].

In Chaucer (" merlion," *Parlement of Foules*, 339) and occasionally in Elizabethan authors. Cary's rendering is incorrect, since Dante has " merlo," a blackbird ; Cary confuses " merlin " with " merle," a blackbird.

XIV, 120. " A race of *counties*."

Cary notes : " I have used this word here for ' counts,' as it is in Shakespeare " (*Much Ado*, IV, i, 319, etc.).

XVI, 3–5. " A veil . . . to the sense . . . so *palpable and gross*."

cf. *Midsummer Night's Dream*, V, i, 365 : " this palpable gross play " (and elsewhere).

XVI, 38. " *Thorough* the fearful agony of hell " [= *through*].

Fairly common in Shakespeare (*J. Caesar*, V, i, 110, etc.).

XVII, 13. " O quick and *forgetive* power " [*inventive, creative*].

From 2 *Henry IV*, IV, iii, 99, commonly taken as a derivative of the verb " forge."

XIX, 108. " The dream and *cozenage* of life " [*cheating*].

Common Elizabethan and Shakespearean (*Hamlet* V, ii, 67, etc.). " Cozened " once only in Milton (*Comus*, 737).

XXIV, 107. " Like greedy and fond *brats*,
That beg."

Use in a serious passage as in Shakespeare (*Coriolanus*, IV, vi, 94). Dante, " fantolini."

XXV, 131. " Nor from that task . . . *surcease* they " [*desist*].
Common in Spenser, occasional in Shakespeare and Milton.

XXVI, 135. " Sorely *waymenting* for my folly past " [*lamenting*].
Used by Chaucer (*Knightes Tale, A*, 995, 1921, etc.), and by Spenser.

XXVIII, 58. " *Valing* her sober eyes " [*lowering*].
Common Elizabethan (*Hamlet*, I, ii, 70, etc.).

XXIX, 18. " Lightning . . . expiring ever *in the spleen*," etc.
cf. *Midsummer Night's Dream*, I, i, 145–6. In Cary also at *Par.* XXX, 47–8, XXXIII, 130–1. cf. *supra*, Chap. IX, p. 304–5.

XXIX, 29. " That wilderness of *primy* sweets."
cf. *Hamlet*, I, iii, 7 : " the youth of primy nature."

XXXIII, 104. " Sent in *vaward* of a troop."
Several times in Shakespeare (*Coriolanus*, I, vi, 53, etc.). Milton has only " van " and " vanguard."

PARADISO

CANTO IV, 28. " Of seraphim he who is most *enskyed*."
cf. *Measure for Measure*, I, iv, 34 : " I hold you as a thing ensky'd and sainted." Dante, " s'india," lit. " en-Gods himself, makes himself one with God."

VI, 116. " Nor let him trust the fond belief, that heaven
Will *truck* its armour for his lilied shield " [*barter*].
Common Elizabethan ; N. E. D. gives instances from Ben Jonson, Hakluyt, etc. Cary may have been following Cowper, *Expostulation* (1781), 374 : " having trucked thy soul, brought home the fee."

VIII, 110–1. " As level with the destined aim,
As ever mark to arrow's point opposed."
cf. *Hamlet*, IV, i, 42–3 : " As level as the cannon to his blank Transports the poison'd shot " ; also *ibid*, IV, v, 150–1.

IX, 31. " A firebrand. . . . That sorely *shent* the region " [*harmed*].
Common in this sense in Chaucer and Spenser ; *Nonne Preestes Tale*, B 4031 : " N'apoplexye shente nat hir heed " ; *F. Queene*, V, iii, 37 : " he his beard did shave, and fowly shent." Occasional in Shakespeare, but only in the sense " reproved." Dante, " fece alla contrada un grande assalto," lit. " made a great assault upon the region."

IX, 54. " The *skillet* that would hold Ferrara's blood " [*vessel*].
cf. *Othello* I, iii, 273 : " make a skillet of my helm."

IX, 109. " Demands my further *parle*."
Common Elizabethan (*Hamlet*, I, i, 62, etc.) ; three times in Milton.

X, 31. " I was with him, *weetless* of ascent,
But as a man, that *weets* his thought, ere thinking " [*knows*].
" To weet," " weetlesse," and other derivatives, common in Spenser (*F. Queene*, I, iii, 6, III, ii, 26, etc.). Shakespeare has " to weet " once ; Milton, only " unweeting(ly)."

XI, 22. " I should *bolt* my words afresh " [*sift*].
Occurs in Chaucer ; fairly common Elizabethan (*Coriolanus*, III, i, 320, and elsewhere in Shakespeare). Milton (this sense), once only (*Comus*, 760).

XII, 27. " Like needle to the star,
In turning to its *whereabout*."
Cary's note quotes *Macbeth* II, i, 58. (Dante, " suo dove ").

XII, 105. " But the track,
Which its smooth *fellies* made, is now deserted " [*felloes*].
cf. *Hamlet* II, ii, 499 : " Break all the spokes and fellies from her wheel " (Fortune's). " Felloes," the curved pieces making up the rim of a wheel ; " fellies," a common alternative in Elizabethan, is still preferred in U.S.A. (N. E. D.).

XIII, 6. " Stars . . . that, with lively ray serene,
O'ercome the *massiest* air " [*thickest*].
A rare (early) sense. N. E. D. gives from North's Plutarch (1595) : " A grosse vapour, darke and massie."

XIV, 47. " As the *gleed*
Which gives out flame " [*live coal*].
Common in Chaucer, etc., and early Elizabethan.

XIV, 89. " God of Sabaoth ! that dost *prank* them thus ! " [*adorn*].
Common Elizabethan ; the verb three times in Shakespeare (*Twelfth Night*, II, iv, 86, etc.), once in Milton (*Comus*, 759). In this sense, more or less archaic after the seventeenth century.

XV, 96. " No *purfled* dames " [*bedecked*].
cf. Chaucer, Prologue 193 : " his sleves purfiled at the hond with grys " ; also in Spenser and once in Milton (*Comus*, 995).

XVI, 1. " O slight *respect* of man's nobility ! "

In a letter to Digby (Nov. 6, 1841, cf. *Memoir*, ii, pp. 321–2) Cary says this line is " a botch occasioned partly by my inability to express the simplicity of the original [" O poca nostra nobiltà di sangue ! "] without becoming flat, and partly to my using a word in its old and now unaccustomed sense. I intended . . . [to] imply not ' reverence ' or ' honour,' but merely ' consideration,' as Shakespeare often uses it, for instance—' There's the respect that makes calamity of so long life " [*Hamlet*, III, i, 68–9].

XVII, 124. " Let them wince, who have their withers wrung."

cf. *Hamlet*, III, ii, 245–6 : " Let the galled jade wince, our withers are unwrung." Cary has slightly softened Dante's " lascia pur grattar, dov'è la rogna," " let them scratch, wherever the scab is."

XVIII, 61. " Some maiden's cheek . . . *pudency*, that stained it " [*modesty*].

cf. *Cymbeline*, II, v, 11 : " a pudency so rosy."

XXV, 80. " A *lamping*, as of quick and volleyed lightning " [*flashing*].

Use as a substantive seems to be unique ; the attributive use is in Spenser (*F. Queene*, III, iii, 1) and Giles Fletcher (N. E. D.).

XXX, 18. " 'Twere too weak
To *furnish out this turn.*"

Cary notes : " Questa vice. Hence perhaps Milton, *P. L.*, VIII, 491 : ' This turn hath made amends.' " But " to serve my turn," and the like, is common in Shakespeare (*Hamlet*, III, iii, 52, etc.) ; and " to furnish out " occurs in Shakespeare (*Timon.*, III, iv, 116) beside the more frequent " furnish forth," while " furnish " is not used at all in Milton's poetry.

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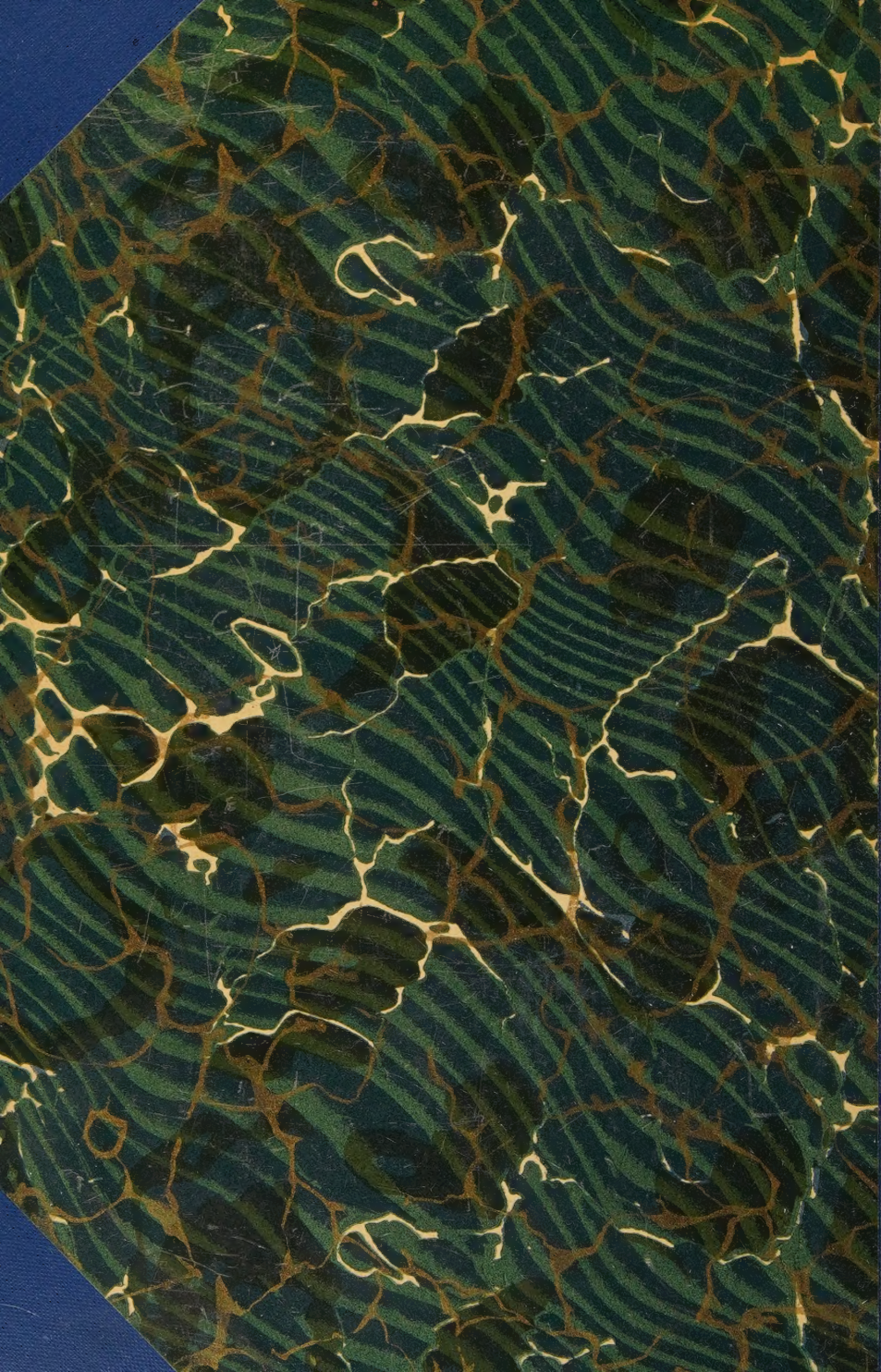
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